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# THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF MECCA AND THE ORIGINS OF ISLAM

ERIC R. WOLF

## INTRODUCTION

THE PRESENT PAPER attempts to analyze some aspects of the early development of Islam in terms of certain anthropological concepts. It would like to take issue with the popular view best expressed in the words of Harrison[1] that "Mohammedanism is little more than the Bedouin mind projected into the realm of religion." It is concerned primarily with the change from a type of society organized on the basis of kin relationships to a type of society possessed of an organized, if rudimentary, state. It will attempt to show that this change took place in an urban environment and was causally connected with the spread of trade. No cross-cultural comparisons will be attempted, though it is hoped that the material presented may have applicability elsewhere, especially in the study of areas in which settled populations and pastoral peoples interact.

Many writers have dealt with the rise of Islam primarily in terms of diffusion. Thus Torrey analyzed "the Jewish foundations of Islam."[2] Bell dealt with "the origin of Islam in its Christian environment."[3] Hirschberg discussed Jewish and Christian teaching in pre-Islamic Arabia and early Islamic times.[4] Grimme, Nielsen, and Philby have traced Islamic elements to southern Arabia as the principal source of diffusion.[5] Kroeber has included Islam in the "exclusive-monotheistic pattern" which is said to characterize Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism and serves as an instance of his concept of "systemic patterns" of diffusion.[6] The work of these writers is aimed at an understanding of the deriva-

1 Harrison, 1924, p. 42.
2 Torrey, 1933.
3 Bell, 1926.
4 Hirschberg, 1939.
5 Grimme, 1892; Nielsen, 1927; Philby, 1947.
6 Kroeber, 1948, p. 314.

tion of some of the culture elements utilized by Islam, or has pointed to the existence of elements analogous to Islam in other religious traditions developed within the same general area.

Our present emphasis is somewhat different. We are interested primarily in the way in which people relate themselves to each other in terms of the material culturally available to them, and how such systems of relationship change due to the impact of internal and external factors. The present approach is thus functional and historical. It is also evolutionary. The writer is interested in one case history, to show up certain changes in social organization which appear to occur at the threshold of transition from one level of organization to another.

The presentation does not aspire in any way to completeness. It must needs disregard large areas of culture which are peripheral to the present problem. Thus, for example, the change in the position of women from pre-Islamic times to the period of Islam has been disregarded here. Certain areas of culture are isolated for observation, so that hypotheses on the character of systemic change may be derived.

## THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF MECCAN SOCIETY

During the first century AD, the discovery of the regular change of the monsoon made possible the rise of regular coastwise trade around the Arabian peninsula. This lowered freight rates sufficiently to cause the main overland route from Yemen to Syria to lose much of its importance. While most of the coastwise trade passed into non-Arab hands, the Arab inhabitants of the Hejaz seized what was left of the carrying trade along the main caravan route. This marginal economic development led to the establishment of a permanent settlement in the valley of Mecca, around the year 400 AD.[7]

This permanent settlement was founded by members of the tribe of Koreish, an impoverished subdivision of the larger pastoral tribe Kinana. Before settling at Mecca, the Koreish lived as pastoral nomads in scattered migratory kin groups which added to their livelihood by selling protection to passing caravans.[8] The social organization of these groups appears to have followed the general pattern of such organization among the Bedouins of the pre-Islamic period. They were "local groups habitually moving together,"[9] composed of a chief and his family, free families, protected strangers who were not blood relatives, and slaves.[10] The chief, usually the oldest or most respected male of the group, was responsible

7 Lammens, 1926, p. 13.
8 Lammens, 1928, p. 239.
9 Smith, 1903, p. 43.
10 Levy, 1933, vol. 1, p. 278.

for the care of poor, widows, and orphans, for hospitality to strangers, for payments of blood money,[11] and for the maintenance of order within the group.[12] Yet, then as now, "it is only in war, or on the march, which is conducted with all the precautions of war, that the sheikh of a tribe exercises an active authority."[13] Chief and free families were linked together by bonds of kinship. Those individuals who travelled with the group but were not blood relatives of the rest were tied to them by a number of ritual kin relationships which we shall have occasion to discuss more fully at a later point. These relationships enabled the component elements of the group to "combine on the model or principle of an association of kindred,"[14] and made it possible for outsiders to "feign themselves to be descended from the same stock as the people on whom they were engrafted."[15]

The name of Koreish has received two interpretations, both of sociological rather than etymological interest. One interpretation traces the name back to a word meaning "to collect together." The Koreish are said to carry this name, either because their ancestor "collected together" all migratory kinship units around an already existing religious sanctuary at Mecca[16] or because they "collected together commodities from all sides for sale."[17] Another interpretation derives the name from a word meaning "to trade and make profit."[18] The two interpretations adequately characterize the Koreish as a tribe of traders, living in a permanent settlement.

The settled character of their life set them off from the pastoral nomads of the desert, those who "stayed on the heights of the Hedjaz."[19] "They have lived in towns, when only the heads of the Benu Amr lived in them, and others still led an unsettled existence. They have built many habitations in them, and dug wells," sang one pre-Islamic poet.[20] Another said that if he had chosen to stay with the Koreish, he would not have had to wander about the desert in search of pasture, spending the night at "brackish water . . . in an evil lodging."[21] The Koreish themselves set up

> a set of arbitrary regulations of the following kind; they declared themselves exempt from the obligation which required that they make sour milk, turn milk into butter, and live in tents made of camel hair, thus renouncing all the customs of the Bedouin desert nomads, from whom they wanted to distinguish themselves completely."[22]

11 Procksch, 1899, pp. 7-9.
12 Ashkenazi, 1946-49, p. 665
13 Smith, 1903, p. 68.
14 Maine, 1888, p. 127.
15 *Idem*, p. 126.
16 Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 28.
17 *Idem*, p. 25.
18 Ibn Hishām, 1864, vol. 1, p. 46
19 Ibn Hishām, 1864, p. 85.
20 *Ibid*.
21 Mufaḍḍaliyāt, 1918, p. 254
22 Caetani, 1905, p. 148

The permanent settlement at Mecca existed solely for the purposes of commerce. A pre-Islamic poet testified to this:

> If Mecca had any attractions to offer, Himyarite princes at the head of their armies would long since have hurried there. There winter and summer are equally desolate. No bird flies over Mecca, no grass grows. There are no wild beasts to be hunted. Only the most miserable of all occupations flourishes there, trade.[23]

When Mohammed attempted to ruin Mecca by destroying its Syrian trade, after his flight from Mecca to Medina, a merchant of the Koreish clan of Umaiya said:

> Mohammed has stopped up our trade, his men do not leave the coast clear, and the inhabitants have a pact with them and are largely in understanding with them, so we don't know where to go; but if we remain at home, we shall eat up our capital and cannot maintain ourselves in Mecca over a long period of time, because it is only a settlement for the purpose of carrying on trade, with Syria in the summer time and with Abyssinia in winter.[24]

Without trade, the Meccans would have perished in their "unfruitful valley."[25]

The Koreish appear to have become the dominant traders in western Arabia by stages. First, they sold protection to caravans. Then they began to offer wares "for sale along the overland routes leading through their territory."[26] Finally, they entered the large markets located outside their area, coming into direct trade contacts with Syria and Abyssinia,[27] and with Persia.[28] The Koreish

> skimmed the fat off the fairs of the neighboring places. Mina, Maganna, Dhul Magaz and not least Ukaz were like outposts of Meccan trade. In all these places we find the Koreish; they concentrated business in their hands. The esteem in which they were held can be seen from the fact that the weapons which had to be surrendered for the duration of the markets and the pilgrimage were deposited with a Koreish.[29]

The Koreish thus played an important part in centralizing the economy of the peninsula. Their trading ventures turned Mecca into "a city, secure and at ease, to which supplies come from every side";[30] into a "place of crowding";[31] filled with "their movements, their comings and goings";[32] into "the mother city."[33]

The main article of trade carried north from Mecca was leather, especially tanned camel, cattle, and gazelle hides,[34] products of numerous tanneries located

23 Essad Bey, 1936, p. 44.
24 Wākidī, 1882, p. 100.
25 Koran 14, 40; p. 229.
26 Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 35.
27 *Ibid.*
28 *Idem*, p. 38.
29 Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 3, p. 88.
30 Koran 16, 113; p. 208.
31 *Idem*, 3, 90; p. 395.
32 *Idem*, 3, 196; p. 405.
33 *Idem*, 42, 5; p. 271.
34 Sprenger, 1869, vol. 3, p. 94.

in the towns between Taif and Aden. Other export items were precious metals, dry raisins, and incense.[35] Items of trade carried to Mecca were cereals, oil, wine, mule skins, silk, and luxury goods.[36]

Large amounts of capital were invested in this trade. Caravans comprised up to 2,500 camels[37] and were valued up to 50,000 mithkal, or the equivalent of 2,250 kg of gold.[38] Sprenger has attempted to calculate the annual volume of trade flowing in and out of Mecca:

> We must assume that the Meccans sent annually more than 1,200,000 kg of goods to Syria, and imported as much from there. But we set the value at only 10 mithkal per 100 kg, because they also traded in cereals. Export and import in this direction amounted to roughly a quarter of a million mithkal [or the equivalent of 11,250 kg of gold]. If trade with the south was of equal importance, then they had an annual turnover of half a million. The profits were seldom less than 50 percent, and thus they earned a pure increment of at least 250,000 mithkal.[39]

The sums of needed capital for these operations were brought together through the "development of credit institutions [by means of which] the most humble sums could be turned into capital down to the participation of a dinar or a piece of gold, or even . . . half a ducat of gold."[40] "Few caravans set forth in which the whole population, men and women, had not a financial interest. On their return, every one received a part of the profits proportionate to his stake and the number of shares subscribed."[41] Thus, for example, a caravan in the year 624 AD

> numbered 1,000 camels, almost every man of Koreish had participated in it, even if only with small stakes. 50,000 dinars are said to have been invested in it; most of it belonging to the family of Sa'id b. al Oc Abu Uxaixa, either his own or borrowed in return for a share of half the profit. The Banu Makzum are said to have had 200 camels and 4000 to 5000 mithkal of gold invested in it, al Xarith b. Amir b. Naufal and Umayya b. Xalaf each 1000 mithkal. A number of caravans, belonging to individual Meccan families, were united in this one caravan; the market destination was Gaza.[42]

This "union of the Koreish, their union in equipping caravans winter and summer"[43] centralized trading operations in the hands of the few best equipped to carry on such large-scale ventures.

35 Lammens, 1928, pp. 22-23; Sprenger, 1869, p. 95
36 Lammens, 1928, pp. 22-23; Sprenger, 1869, p. 95.
37 Wāḳidī, 1882, p. 34
38 *Idem*, p. 39.
39 Sprenger, 1869, p. 96.
40 Lammens, 1924, p. 233.
41 Lammens, 1926, p. 16
42 Wāḳidī, 1882, p. 39
43 Koran 61, 1; p. 36.

Money in this society had not yet reached the stage of the universal commodity. Yet precious metals served as a means by which the value of other commodities could be measured. Byzantine and Persian coins were in use,[44] and gold was mined in the Hejaz.[45] As yet, however, "it was not customary to buy and sell with them [coins] except by considering the coins as bullion,"[46] i.e. by weighing rather than by counting them. This may perhaps be attributed to the lack of a central political power whose imprint might have served to standardize the value of the different coins in circulation. At any rate, commodities like food, milk, and wine were sold.[47] Bad harvests around Mecca are said to have caused the prices of bread to rise.[48] Clothing was sold.[49] Abū Sufyān is said to have sold a house for 400 dinars, with 100 dinars for down-payment, and the rest payable in installments.[50] Slaves were sold in what was Arabia's largest slave market.[51] Camels obtained in raids were sold in the open market in Mecca,[52] and the price of horses is said to have been determined by market conditions.[53] Camels were hired out for caravan duty.[54] Ransom was calculated in money terms on certain occasions.[55] Certain occupations, such as sheepherding, guiding caravans, wall building, leeching, etc., were paid in wages.[56] While wages in Medina were usually paid in kind, in Mecca they were usually paid in money.[57]

Credit, pricing, and wages set up relationships between individuals and groups of individuals which were not comprised within the preceding system of kin relationships. Under the impact of commercial development, Meccan society changed from a social order determined primarily by kinship and characterized by considerable homogeneity of ethnic origin into a social order in which the fiction of kinship served to mask a developing division of society into classes, possessed of considerable ethnic diversity

Accumulation of wealth and power in some clans of the Koreish tribe divided the Koreish into rich and poor. To some extent, this was mirrored in the pattern of settlement.[58] The two dominant Koreish clans, Makhzum and Umaiya, occupied the "inner city" around the central sanctuary of the Ka'ba, and were called "Koreish of the center." The other eight and poorer Koreish clans occupied the

44 Balādhurī, 1916-24, p. 233
45 Buhl, 1930, p. 51.
46 Balādhurī, 1916-24.
47 Ibn Hishām, 1864, vol. 2, pp. 3, 7; Mufaḍḍaliyāt,, 1918, p. 34.
48 Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 36.
49 Ibn Hishām, 1864, p. 9.
50 Wāḳidī, 1882, p. 340.
51 Lammens, 1928, p. 12.
52 Ibn Hishām, 1864, pp. 21-22.
53 Mufaḍḍaliyāt, 1918, p. 308.
54 *Idem*, p. 318.
55 Wāḳidī, 1882, p. 76.
56 Bukhārī, 1903-14, vol. 2, pp. 62-64; Sprenger, 1869, vol. 1, p. 275.
57 Sprenger, 1869, vol. 3, p. 141.
58 Wüstenfeld, 1864, pp. 58-75, *passim*.

"outer city" and were called "Koreish of the outskirts." The real functional units of Meccan society, however, were no longer clans as such, nor localized groups of kin, but clusters of rich merchants, their families and their dependents. The dependent population was made up of several groups. Differentiation of status, minor among the pastoral nomads, assumed major importance in Mecca. First, there were the slaves. Secondly, there existed a group of mercenaries, many of whom were of slave origin.[59] Thirdly, merchants maintained the necessary personnel for their caravans. Fourthly, there were middlemen, like the future Caliph Omar. Fifthly, there were people who had come under the domination of the wealthy through debts, like the dependents of al-'Abbās who had brought them under his sway through usury.[60] Sixthly, there existed a group of people who worked for wages. Finally, there were the clients or protected persons, called *mawālī* (sing. *mawlā*).

This group of clients deserves special consideration. A client stood in a relation of dependency, called *jiwār*, to a patron or protector. The word for client is derived from a root signifying "closeness." Two kinds of closeness were distinguished. A pre-Islamic poet speaks of "cousins of our cousins, of the same stock by birth, and a cousin knit to us by an oath."[61] Clients, called cousins by oath, are contrasted with cousins by birth.[62] The client-patron relationship in its pure form involved a tie of ritual kinship, sealed by commingling of blood and by an oath sworn at the central religious sanctuary, the Ka'ba.[63]

Within Mecca, there were thirteen major groups of clients, each affiliated to a patron family or patron clan.[64] The clients were of diverse origins. Some were freed slaves.[65] Others were outlaws from tribal groups who sought refuge. Some were individuals who had moved into the protection of the group through matrilocal marriage. Some were adopted persons.[66]

Just as settlement in Mecca was nominally organized on a genealogical basis, with two clans at the center and eight clans at the outskirts, so the functioning social groups within Meccan society tended to be formally organized on the principle of the fiction of kinship by blood. This fiction was the only means by which, apart from slavery, individuals could be related to each other. Within the social clusters, the clients represented a group not linked by birth but through ritual kin arrangements.

Due to the commercial orientation of Meccan society, this patron-client tie,

59 Lammens, 1928, p. 244.
60 Buhl, 1930, p. 109.
61 Mufaḍḍaliyāt, 1918, p. 34.
62 Goldziher, 1889, vol. 1, p. 105.
63 Smith, 1903, pp. 50-51.
64 Wüstenfeld, 1864, pp. 59-75, *passim*.
65 Smith, 1903, p. 51.
66 *Idem*, pp. 49-52, *passim*.

formally based on a fictional relation of kin, actually took on more and more the guise of an exploitative relation between members of different class groups. This relationship was reinforced by the prevalence of wage-payment and by the institution of debt slavery.[67] It has been pointed out repeatedly that the bulk of Mohammed's first converts came from this group of clients and from the slaves of the city.[68] Caetani has even argued that Mohammed himself was a client of the Koreish, rather than a blood relative,[69] and in this he is supported by a curious remark by Mohammed: "And they say, 'Had but this Koran been sent down to some great one of the two cities . . .!'"[70] as well as by other evidence.[71] When Mohammed first embarked on his career, the excitement among the slaves of Mecca was so intense that a leading slave owner who had one hundred slaves removed them from the city because he feared that they might become converts.[72] When Mohammed besieged Taif, he called on the slaves of the town to desert to his camp where they would receive their freedom.[73]

The mechanism of kinship between patron and client provided backing for the individual who was poor or powerless. It put the weight of a powerful group of ritual kin behind him. The isolated individual without such backing was exposed to attack or to unobstructed killing in a blood feud.[74] Yet the same mechanism was also potentially disruptive of social stability. If a client was attacked, the protecting group had to make a show of force. This demonstration of force, in turn, involved the protecting group in every-widening circles of conflict. For example, during an encounter between Mohammed and the Koreish, the client of a leading Koreish merchant was killed by the Muslims. His brother demanded that the dead man's patron exercise the duty of blood revenge. The merchant tried to avoid this duty, fully cognizant of the fact that its exercise would only involve Mecca more deeply in war with the Muslims, but was forced to give in.[75] Like the relationship between sworn allies *(ḥilf)* which involved mutual aid between two equal parties and which we shall touch on more fully later, the relations between patron and client acted as a double-edged sword. The extension of kinship bonds to the individual merely increased the possibility of conflict between groups organized on the kinship model.

As Mecca came to be characterized by growing heterogeneity of status, its population also became more heterogeneous ethnically. Mention is made of Syrian

67 Lammens, 1924, pp. 236-237.
68 Caetani, 1905, p. 240; Procksch, 1899, pp. 81-82.
69 Caetani, 1905, pp. 68-69.
70 Koran, 43, 30; p. 136.
71 Caetani, 1905, pp. 233-234, note 1 to p. 225.
72 Sprenger, 1851, p. 159.
73 *Encylopedia of Islam*, vol. 1, p. 80.
74 Buhl, 1930, pp. 36-37.
75 Procksch, 1899, p. 38.

caravan leaders; of travelling monks and curers; of Syrian merchants; foreign smiths and healers; Copt carpenters; Negro idol sculptors; Christian doctors, surgeons, dentists and scribes; Christian women married into a Koreish clan; Abyssinian sailors and mercenaries.[76] Abyssinian, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Syrian, and Byzantine slaves were sold in the market place.[77] The market center of Mecca exercised an attraction on groups and individuals beyond the Arabian periphery, as well as within the confines of the peninsula itself.

## RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT IN MECCAN SOCIETY

Economic development set off related tendencies in the field of religion. Gibb has spoken of "the abandonment of local shrines and the growing practice of pilgrimage to central shrines venerated by groups of tribes (of which the Ka'ba in Mecca was one of the most important)."[78]

The leading Koreish held the ranking positions in the Meccan religious hierarchy as well as the dominant positions in the economic system. The Umaiya clan, especially, appears to have owed its predominance, at least in part, to its possession of special religious prerogatives in the past. One pre-Islamic poet swears "by the holy month of the sons of Umaiya" and another is quoted as saying that the Banu Umaiya in Koreish were like the [priestly] family of the Banu Khafajah in the tribe of 'Uqail.[79] At any rate, the strongly monopolistic character of this Koreish religious oligarchy is evident in their attempt to pass their religious offices down to their first born in the direct line of descent.[80] The major offices, that of the priesthood, the presidency of the council house, and the offices concerned with the distribution of food and water to the pilgrims, were apparently developed by the Koreish themselves, and were preëmpted by them. Three minor offices which seem to have been traditional in the worship of the Ka'ba[81] were held by three minor tribal groups. The religious society of the *Ḥums,* again headed by the Koreish, further served to reinforce their dominance in the religious sphere.[82]

Like other Arabian sanctuaries, the Ka'ba was surrounded by a sacred area, called the *ḥarām.* Within this precinct no blood could be shed. As the economic importance of Mecca grew, the Koreish self-consciously sought to extend the sacred precinct as a means for increasing the stability of social relations in their

76 Lammens, 1928, pp. 12-32, *passim.*
77 *Idem,* pp. 18-19.
78 Gibb, 1948, p. 113.
79 Mufaḍḍaliyāt, 1918, pp. 125-126.
80 Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 34.
81 Caetani, 1905, p. 105; Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 3, p. 77.
82 Caetani, 1905, p. 148.

trading territory. They sought to "put their warehouses, their strong boxes, at greater distance from their turbulent neighbors."[83] The story of Amr b. Luhaiy illustrates the secular interest involved in this effort. It shows that the Meccan traders ringed the Ka'ba with the idols of other tribal groups, in order to increase the importance of the sanctuary and to attract more visitors to the growing city.[84]

The extension of the concept of an inviolable zone in which blood feuds were outlawed, and new fights could not develop, appears to have resulted from the development of trade and to have fostered a further development of it. Wellhausen writes:

> Within the tumultuous confusion which fills the desert, the festivities at the beginning of each season represent the only enjoyable periods of rest. A peace of God at this time interrupts the continuous feuds for a fair period of time. The most diverse tribes which otherwise did not trust each other at all, make common pilgrimage to the same holy places without fear, through the land of friend and foe. Trade raises its head, and general and lively exchange results. . . . The exchange of commodities is followed by an exchange of ideas. A community of ideological interest develops that comprises all of Arabia. . . .[85]

The Koreish developed a special pact with other tribal groups to guarantee the inviolability of pilgrims on their journeys to the religious center.[86] Their attempts to maintain peace earned them the scorn of the more war-like desert tribes. "No one has yet lived through a terror [raid] by them," said a Huḍail poet.[87] "They are people who do not know how to fight," said a Jew of Medina.[88] "Your courage fails you in battle," sneered another poet, "at best, you are [only] good at figuring in the ranks of the processions!"[89]

In stressing the Ka'ba as the center of their power, the Koreish broke with the traditional notion of a territory belonging to a certain kin group, and representing its inviolable property.

> Under holy protection, there had here developed a general security under law, unheard of in Arabia where law does not otherwise extend beyond the tribe and this limit can only be extended through clientage. No stranger stood here in need of a pass, none needed the protection of a native patron, . . . everyone was secure in this free state of God, and if he was subjected to injustice and force, he always found someone who backed him up.[90]

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83 Lammens, 1928, p. 239.
84 Ibn Hishām, 1864, vol. 1, p. 39.
85 Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 3, p. 183.
86 Caetani, 1905, p. 165.
87 Hell, 1933, p. 10.
88 Ibn Hishām, 1864, vol. 2, p. 2.
89 Lammens, 1928, p. 145.
90 Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 3, p. 88.

The Koreish thus laid the basis for a transition from a concept of territoriality circumscribed by kin relations to a concept of territoriality in which considerations of kinship do not play a prominent part. Caetani states that they

> admitted that if Arabs not of their own kin were born in the precinct of the Ka'ba or in its vicinity, they had the same rights as the Koreish, in order to validate the idea that settlement near the Ka'ba gave them precedence over all other Arabs.[91]

Parallel to the abandonment of local shrines and growing centralization of worship, there occurred an increasing tendency to stress one deity above others. There existed religious symbols denoting the different social units of the older kinship society. Thus, each Koreish clan appears to have had its special clan symbol,[92] and each Meccan household had its household god.[93] The extension of kinship ties into ritual kin ties of clientage had led to a special predominance of "the conception of god and worshipper as patron and client."[94] But as the new and non-kin based relations began to emerge in increased strength, the importance of one god, Allah, grew concomitantly. Allah was preëminently the guardian of social relations which extended beyond the scope of kinship. In terms of the pre-Islamic formulae, he is "the guardian of faith and the avenger of treason," the god in whose name people are supposed to "fulfill their contracts, honor their relatives by oath, and feed their guest."[95]

> Allah is the Zeus Xenios, the protector of *gar* and *daif*, of client and guest. Within the lineage and to a lesser degree within the tribe, *rahim*, the piety of family relationship, the holiness of the blood, exercises protection. But when rights and duties exist which go beyond the lineage, then Allah is the one who imposes them and guarantees them. He is the protector of *giwar* [the patron-client relationship] by which the natural circle of the community is widened and supplemented in a fashion which benefits above all the client and the guest.[96]

We have seen that the economic centralization of western Arabia through trade was accompanied by a related tendency in the centralization of religious worship. Here we venture the hypothesis that the emergence of social classes out of the network of a society based primarily on actual or fictive ties of kinship was accompanied, in the sphere of religion, by an increased emphasis on the deity associated with non-kin relationship.

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91 Caetani, 1905, p. 148.
92 Lammens, 1928, p. 145.
93 Wākidī, 1882, p. 370.
94 Smith, 1927, p. 79.
95 Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 3, p. 191.
96 Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 3, p. 190.

## THE ORGANIZATION OF POWER IN MECCAN SOCIETY

The way in which power is organized in a given society must be considered both in terms of internal, or endogenous, and in terms of external or exogenous factors.[97]

In terms of internal development, the lines of political power in Mecca tended to coincide with the lines of economic power. In theory, power in Mecca was located in a town council, made up of adult males. In actuality, however, the council was dominated by the same wealthy merchants who ruled over the clusters of kin and dependents, and who held the main religious offices. They decided general policy and made alliances. They represented the "union of the Koreish" and their representatives made formal trade agreements with the Abyssinian and the Persian courts.[98] They permitted foreigners to address the town council on specific matters; and received the taxes which all foreigners who were not kin or ritual kin had to pay if they wanted to trade in the area.

Despite its oligarchic character, the council had no direct legislative power and lacked a central executive organ. In a society which was rapidly moving away from primary reliance on kinship ties, its power was still largely kin-based. It lay in the council's ability to break a recalcitrant by refusing to grant him protection. The mechanism for enforcing such decisions was the blood feud, and law was maintained only by the unwillingness of potential culprits to risk the dangers of an encounter with the powerful "Koreish of the center." The limitations of this negative power as a means of effective social control are shown clearly in the story of the supposed boycott against Mohammed at the end of his Meccan period. Whether apocryphal or not,[99] the story demonstrates that

> the ideological movement created by the prophet tore apart the ancient Arab order which was based on kinship. Most members of the boycotted lineage did not believe in Mohammed . . . and on the other hand, some of Mohammed's most fervent adherents like Abu Bekr and Umar were left untouched by this rule of conduct, since they did not belong to his lineage.[100]

Just as the blood feud as a means of social control in a class-divided society could not govern internal friction, so kin-based mechanisms used to ensure security against the outside world failed of their purpose. We have already seen that the patron-client relation, extending protection to individuals or groups, at the same

97 Wittfogel, 1932, pp. 542-551. 98 Wüstenfeld, 1864, pp. 35, 38.
99 Caetani, 1905, pp. 290-291; Buhl, 1930, p. 175.
100 Buhl, 1930, p. 176.

time extended the possibility of inter-tribal conflict. The same may be said of the so-called *ḥilf* relationship. The *ḥilf* generally designates a relation of coöperation between roughly equal partners, in contrast to the patron-client relation which involves a stronger and a weaker party.[101] Such a pact of coöperation could be entered into temporarily for a specific purpose like joint action in war or for the purpose of protecting a caravan. Or it could develop into a permanent tie between tribes and tribal groups.[102] The tie was sanctified by a ceremony in which both parties mixed their blood,[103] and might be surrounded by a mythology of common descent.[104] Wellhausen has spoken of the Arab genealogy as a statistical device,[105] and both he and Caetani[106] have stressed the fictional character of descent in Arabia in general. The Koreish maintained such pacts, for example, with many members of the tribe Sulaim who possessed mineral resources and commanded the road from Medina as well as access to Nejd and the Persian Gulf;[107] with individual Syrian merchants;[108] with a Bedouin marauder like al-Barrad; and others.

While these kin-based mechanisms permitted the formation of more extensive social bonds, they were also charged with potential for further friction. Fights between far-off desert tribes, involving partners to a pact with the Koreish, involved the Koreish against their better interests. When a chain of petty insults started a war between the tribes Kinana and Hawazin, the Koreish had to enter the fight on the side of their Kinana relatives. When their sworn ally al-Barrad plundered the caravan of the king of Hira, they were drawn into the quarrel on his side. Thus the system of ritual kin on which the Koreish relied for increased security at the same time counteracted their interest in peaceful relations of trade.

Lammens has discussed the reaction against direct blood revenge and the growing preference for settlement of blood feuds through arbitration and payment of blood money which came to the fore in pre-Islamic Arabia.[109] It is possible that this reaction was related to a growing realization that the prevailing kinship mechanisms proved disruptive of the peace they were supposed to maintain. It may also have been conditioned by the growing utility and ubiquity of money, by means of which blood claims could be reduced more easily to a common denominator.

An element in the social organization of Mecca which was not disguised as a kinship unit was the military force at the disposal of the Koreish, the so-called

101 Pedersen, 1914, p. 29; Bräunlich, 1934, p. 191.
102 Bräunlich, 1934, p. 194.
103 Pedersen, 1914, p. 21; Smith, 1903, pp. 60-61.
104 Nallino, 1941, pp. 77-78.
105 Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 4, p. 27.
106 Caetani, 1905, p. 59.
107 *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol. 4, p. 518.
108 Lammens, 1914, p. 79.
109 Lammens, 1928, p. 232.

Ahabis. This group of soldiers may have consisted either of splinter elements drawn from different tribal groups; or they may have been Abyssinian mercenaries, if one may put credence in Lammens' interpretation of the textual material.[110] They may have resembled the "men of different Arab elements which followed the kings . . . a type of Praetorian guard" characteristic of the Himyarite kingdom of Kinda and the Persian satellite kingdom of Hira.[111] Their main function was to provide protection for caravans[112] and to assist the Koreish in warfare. The cadre for these troops was drawn from the Kinana, genealogical relatives of the Koreish. While these military guards were thus non-tribal in character, and were organized on the basis of a non-kin principle, they were integrated into the social structure by subordinating them to the command of tribesmen related by kinship to the Meccan oligarchy.

If interaction with the tribal groups near Mecca could be phrased in terms of ritual kin relations, interaction with societies beyond the Arabian periphery meant contact with developed state organizations. These were, first, the satellite states of the greater powers, like the Himyarite Kinda, the Persian Hira, and the Byzantine Ghassan; secondly, the great powers themselves: Byzantium and Persia in the north and first Himyar and later Abyssinia in the south. Hira and Ghassan were outposts which kept the pastoral nomads in check. Built up by nomads themselves, they were used "as barriers against their brothers who pushed after them."[113] They also set the "terms of trade" against the pastoral nomads in the exchange of products between desert and agricultural area. The cultivated zone furnishes the nomads with cereals and handicraft products, permitting them free access to pasture, meadowland and watering places after harvest. The nomads in turn supply the settled area with livestock and livestock products. When the nomads are strong, they rig the terms of exchange against the settlers, by adding tribute in kind to their other demands. Sometimes they may be compensated by outright payment by a larger power. When the settled area is strongly organized politically, it can exploit the need of the nomads for pasture to exact tribute from them in turn.[114] Thus the kings of Hira received leather, truffles, and horses from the nomads,[115] in exchange for pasturing rights in Iraq. Ghassan and Hira even fought each other over the right to exact tribute from a certain area.[116]

These satellites had certain characteristics in common. They maintained armed "Praetorian guards" consisting of detribalized elements[117] and a system

110 Lammens, 1928, pp. 244-283, *passim*.
111 Rothstein, 1899, pp. 136-137.
112 Lammens, 1928, p. 283.
113 Rothstein, 1899, p. 130.
114 Dussaud, 1907, pp. 3-4.
115 Fraenkel, 1886, p. 178.
116 Rothstein, 1899, pp. 130-131.
117 *Idem*, pp. 136-137.

of taxation.[118] Their very existence constituted a dilemma for the larger dominant power. If they grew too strong politically, they had to be incorporated into the domain of the dominant power.[119] When they were incorporated, the lack of an independent buffer was immediately felt in new exactions and incursions on the part of the nomads.

The state of Kinda demands some special consideration. It represents the first attempt of which we know to set up a more encompassing social structure in central Arabia, with a center of gravity in the Nejd, around the end of the 5th century AD. The first Kinda prince apparently owed his dominance over the tribal groups included in the Kinda coalition to the desire of the kingdom of Himyar in south Arabia to erect a buffer against Persia.[120] As soon as the coalition was organized, it began to raid Byzantine and Persian territory.[121] "It is evident that not only all Nejd but also great parts of al-Higaz, al-Bahrain, and al-Yamama were subject to al-Harit's [Kindite] sceptre,"[122] and the Kinana, mother-tribe of the Koreish, the Asad and the Kais-'Ailan of the Hejaz are mentioned as part of the federation.[123] The Kinda state maintained a "Praetorian guard" similar to that of the Hira and Ghassan, and tax collectors.[124] It broke up as quickly as it had developed, apparently due to an inability to collect the requisite taxes from its component nomadic groups.[125]

The position of Mecca in relation to these organized areas is of considerable importance. Lattimore has pointed out, in connection with another area of interaction between nomads and settled populations, that the probability for independent socio-political development increases beyond a certain distance from the dominant center.[126] In this connection, it is significant that Meccan power rose after the Kindite power disintegrated, and that it was able to maintain its independence from Abyssinia, Byzantium, and Persia. Ghassanid expansion reached as far south as al-Ela, Khaibar and Hajel,[127] but never reached Mecca. At least one attempt was made to include Mecca in the Byzantine zone, but it failed. 'Uthmān Ibn Huwairith attempted to seize leadership in Mecca by threatening it with Byzantine reprisals against its Syrian trade. The attempt was foiled, permitting the Umaiya clan to rise to unchallenged domination in the city.[128] The Abyssinian attempt to attack the Persians from the south[129] was similarly doomed

118 *Ibid.*
119 *Idem*, pp. 117-120; Nöldeke, 1887, p. 31.
120 Olinder, 1927, pp. 37-40.
121 *Idem*, p. 57.
122 *Idem*, p. 75.
123 *Idem*, p. 74.
124 *Idem*, p. 81.
125 *Idem*, pp. 77-78.
126 Lattimore, 1940, pp. 238-240.
127 Musil, 1926, p. 259.
128 Sprenger, 1869, vol. 1, p. 91.
129 Tabari, 1879, pp. 204-205.

to failure. The legend of the Battle of the Elephants in which God is said to have saved the Ka'ba from destruction by the Abyssinians appears to reflect the fact that the Abyssinians had reached the outer limits of their ability to expand. With leather as its principal export to the north, and with cereals as its principal import, Mecca participated in the general exchange between pastoral and settled area. Its relative distance from the center, and its ability to capitalize on a peripheral trade route permitted the independent growth of state organization in this zone.

## THE EMERGENCE OF THE ISLAMIC STATE

The religious revolution associated with the name of Mohammed made possible the transition from Meccan society as we have described it to a society possessed of the elements which permit state organization. The success of Mohammed's prophetic mission permitted these elements to crystallize out of the preceding social network in which kin relationships had become increasingly fictional and disruptive.

The emergence of Islam completed the centralization of worship by making Mecca the sole religious center. It completed the trend towards worship of the deity governing non-kin relations by making this deity the supreme and only god, "the personification of state supremacy."[130] In Islam—"voluntary surrender" or "self-surrender" to a supreme deity[131]—all men were to be clients of God, the only patron. "And warn those who dread being gathered to their Lord, that patron or intercessor they shall have none but Him," says the Koran.[132] "God is the patron of believers."[133]

"There are no genealogies in Islam," states a traditional saying.[134] The very act of adherence to Islam implied an individual decision into which considerations of kin did not enter. The story of the boycott of the Prophet's lineage shows how completely the principles of kin relationships failed to cope with the new force. "Truly, the most worthy of honor in the sight of God is he who fears him most,"[135] not the individual whose lineage is the most famous or the most powerful. When Mohammed entered Mecca, he declared: "God has put an end to the pride in noble ancestry, you are all descended from Adam and Adam from dust, the noblest among you is the man who is most pious."[136] Adherence to Islam was not a matter of kin relationships: "Mohammed is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Apostle of God."[137] Islam set kinsman against

130 Wellhausen, 1927, p. 8.
131 Smith, 1927, p. 80; Lyall, 1903, p. 784.
132 Koran 6, 51; p. 321.
133 *Idem*, 2, 258; p. 367.
134 Levy, 1933, vol. 2, p. 79.
135 Koran 49, 13; p. 470.
136 Wākidi, 1882, p. 338.
137 Koran 33, 40; p. 438.

kinsman. "The swords of the sons of his father were drawn against him," mourns a song about the battle of Badr, "oh God! Love among relatives was deeply injured there!"[138] A son turned Muslim could approve the death of his father who had fought with the Koreish against the new faith.[139]

As Islam built on ties other than those of kinship, it had to put a limit on the disruptive exercise of power and protection implicit in the blood feud. On the occasion of his entrance into Mecca, Mohammed "declared all demands for interest payments, for blood revenge or blood money stemming from pagan times as null and void."[140] The same demand was expressed in a letter to the people of Najran: "There are no interest payments and no demands for blood revenge from pagan times."[141] God permits a relaxation of the *lex talionis*.[142]

> A believer killeth not a believer but by mischance: and whoso killeth a believer by mischance shall be bound to free a believer from slavery; and the blood money shall be paid to the family of the slain, unless they convert it into alms. But if the slain believer be of a hostile people, then let him confer freedom on a slave who is a believer; and if he be of a people between whom and yourselves there is an alliance, then let the blood-money be paid to his family, and let him set free a slave who is a believer: and let him who hath not the means, fast two consecutive months. This is the penance enjoined by God; and God is Knowing, Wise![143]

The passage cited shows that the incipient Islamic state did not suppress the *talio* as such. It even left the settlement of such disputes to the families concerned. It did, however, insist that the manner in which they were settled conformed to the "penance enjoined by God," and attempted to convert the demand for blood into a demand for wergild. In pre-Islamic times, the duty of carrying on the blood feud passed from father to son in direct inheritance.[144] Islam demanded early and peaceful settlement. The moratorium on blood feud was so much part of the new creed that certain tribes postponed their affiliation with Mohammed, until they had settled all questions of blood revenge.[145]

Another set of kin-like relations superseded by Islam were the relations involving past allies. There was to be "no *ḥilf* in Islam."[146]

> The social relations within Arab tribal life represented by the *taḥalluf* (*ḥilf*) were of necessity as undesirable to representatives of Mohammed's ideas as the particularism of the tribes. For they furthered feuding between the tribes and were to be overcome in Islam by the brotherhood of all who professed Islam.[147]

138 Ibn Hishām, 1864, vol. 1, p. 390.
139 *Idem*, p. 340.
140 Wāḳidī, 1882, p. 338.
141 Sperber, 1916, p. 91.
142 Koran 2, 173-174; p. 356.
143 Koran, 4, 94; p. 421.
144 Lammens, 1928, p. 202.
145 *Idem*, p. 197.
146 *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol. 2, p. 308.
147 Goldziher, 1889, p. 69.

The core of the new society was the militant brotherhood of Muhaǰǰirīn and Anṣār. The Muhaǰǰirīn were the Muslims who fled with Mohammed from Mecca to Medina. The Anṣār were their Medinese hosts. Armed, and without ties of kin to bind them, they resembled the "Praetorian guard" of the kings of Hira and Kinda. They were the storm troops of Islam. A Hudail poet compared them to his own tribes. The Hudail were called "a luxurious people of [many] subdivisions." The Muslims were "a multitude drawn together from many sources of [warriors] clad in iron."[148] They rent the ties of kinship which had bound them in the past. The Anṣār were commanded to inform on those "who have been forbidden secret talk, and return to what they have been forbidden, and talk privately together with wickedness, and hate and disobedience towards the Apostle."[149] "The foundations of society, faithful coöperation of kin, were so undermined that they were not safe from espionage on the part of their closest relatives."[150] Disaffected individuals were threatened with use of force.[151]

It is interesting to note how, initially, attempts were made to invent a new functional kind of kinship for this group. Mohammed ordered

> that those who migrated with him and the believers in Medina should regard themselves as brethren and therefore able to inherit from one another, while all the bonds of relationship between the Muhadjurun and their relatives left in Mecca were to be regarded as broken.[152]

The Koran states:

> Verily, they who have believed and fled their homes and spent their substance for the cause of God, and they who have taken in the prophet and been helpful to him, shall be near of kin the one to the other.[153]

They were to form a special aristocracy:

> They who have believed, and fled their homes, and striven with their substance and with their persons on the path of God, shall be of highest grade with God.[154]

The new society which arose in Medina and was given organized form by means of a town charter promulgated by Mohammed,[155] was called *umma,* i.e. community. The community included not only Muslims, but non-Muslims as well. The *umma* comprised the whole territory of Medina, embracing all who lived within it.[156] These were all included in the incipient Islamic state, "one commu-

148 Hell, 1933, p. 6.
149 Koran 58, 9; p. 451.
150 Sprenger, 1869, vol. 3, p. 27.
151 Ibn Hishām, 1864, vol. 1, pp. 266-267.
152 *Encyclopedia of Islam,* vol. 3, p. 508.
153 Koran 8, 73; p. 381.
154 Koran 9, 20; p. 472.
155 Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 4, pp. 68-73.
156 *Idem,* p. 74.

nity over against mankind." The core of the new community were the Muslims, "a unit with its own laws within the whole society, destined of necessity to disrupt the ties of the whole."[157]

The elements of state power developed gradually. In his deportment as a prophet, Mohammed followed pre-Islamic precedents.

> The mantic knowledge [of the pagan seer, called *kahin*] is based on ecstatic inspiration. . . . They are interrogated in all important tribal and state occasions . . . in private the *kahins* especially act as judges. . . . They interpret dreams, find lost camels, establish adulteries, clear up other crimes. . . . The prophet Mohammed disclaimed being a *kahin*. But . . . his earliest appearance as a prophet reminds us strongly of the manner of the soothsayer. He was an ecstatic and had "true dreams" like them. . . . Even the forms which he was still using for administering justice and settling disputes in Medina during the early years of his stay there correspond in their main features to those of the pagan *kahin* and *hakam*.[158]

Mohammed himself acted as judge in a few known cases only.[159] Yet his very word, said to be the word of God, acted as law in the new state. During his life-time, the prophet himself was the final judicial authority. He deposed lineage chiefs and replaced them with his own candidates.[160] He appointed officials, in the majority of cases apparently on a temporary basis.[161] The incipient state did not take on itself direct governing power over groups which became affiliated with it. Usually, its "emissaries exercised a sort of supervision and collected taxes."[162] In many cases, local authorities continued, themselves becoming officials of the new state.[163] In one case, a Christian chief became collector of the Islamic tax from his own people.[164]

The subordination of the right of the blood feud to the power of the state brings out more clearly the character of the new organization. The blood feud implied exercise of power based on kinship. The consequences of its exercise was warfare between kin groups. With the limitation of the blood feud under Islam

> there was accomplished a separation of war and blood revenge which had been impossible in such clarity before. The notion of blood revenge is still applied to war. The faithful are each other's avengers of blood on the war path of God, but tribal law and family sentiment are wholly ignored.[165]

The family remained the executor of the civil feud, but the use of force in the form of war became an attribute of the state. Due to the limited development

157 Buhl, 1930, p. 210.
158 *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol. 2, pp. 625-626.
159 Caetani, 1905, pp. 645-646.
160 Margoliouth, 1905, p. 216.
161 'Abdurraziq, 1934, p. 168.
162 Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 3, p. 29.
163 Wellhausen, *idem*, p. 30.
164 Husain, 1938, pp. 126-127.
165 Procksch, 1899, p. 66.

of the judicial power in the new state, writers have often misunderstood the meaning of warfare in Islam. 'Abdurraziq has criticized traditional views of *jihād* (the holy war) as a war of conversion by fire and sword, as follows:

> All evidence shows that the purpose of the holy war was not to be religious propaganda and to bring the people to believe in Allah and his prophet alone. The holy war is carried on only for the purpose of affirming the authority of the state and of enlarging the kingdom.[166] . . . A government must base itself on its armed force and ability to exercise power.[167]

The new state was capable not only of the essential show of force, but also possessed of effective taxing power. One fifth of all booty was assigned to the Prophet as "the part of God." Among pre-Islamic Bedouins, one fourth or one fifth of all booty[168] was assigned to the chief "as a kind of state treasure which was of course in the hands of physical individuals due to the lack of judicial persons."[169] The chief was supposed to use this wealth to settle blood feuds, grant hospitality, feed guests and the poor, and care for widows and orphans.[170] The prophet's "fifth" represents the transfer of this mechanism from the level of the kin group to the level of the state. In pre-Islamic times, areas of pasture located in the sacred precincts around sanctuaries could be used as common pastures not monopolized by any one tribe.[171] In Islam, the sacred precincts and the pastures located in them became state property, with "Allah the legal successor of the pagan deity,"[172] where tax camels and other livestock could be kept.[173]

Muslims had to pay a so-called poor tax or alms tax (*zakāt*), as one of their five essential religious duties. It soon became a graduated income tax.[174] Payment or non-payment of this tax quickly became the chief test of adherence to Islam. When Mohammed died, many affiliated tribal groups broke away from the new state, maintaining their newly acquired religious faith, but refusing to pay taxes. Mohammed, during his lifetime, had already castigated "the Arabs of the desert . . . who reckon what they expend in the cause of God as tribute, and wait for some change of fortune to befall you."[175] The leaders of the revolts against the state proclaimed their missions "like Mohammed in the name of Allah and not in the name of some pagan deity. . . . They wanted to carry on divine worship, but not to pay taxes."[176] The new officials "caused anger among the populace,

166 'Abdurraziq, 1934, p. 175.
167 *Idem*, p. 176.
168 Mufaḍḍaliyāt, 1918, p. 237.
169 Procksch, 1899, p. 9.
170 *Idem*, pp. 7, 59-60.
171 Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 3, p. 104.
172 *Idem*, p. 104.
173 Kremer, 1875-77, vol. 1, p. 57.
174 *Idem*, pp. 51-52.
175 Koran 9, 99; p. 481.
176 Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 6, p. 7.

especially in their capacity as tax collectors."[177] Among the Tamim, "after the death of Mohammed the question was whether the tax camels which had been brought together were to be handed over at the proper station or not; this was the criterion of faith in Islam or of defection."[178] When the Muslims won, the camels were handed over.[179]

The use of the poor-tax to finance the newly established state structure implies the transference of a mechanism which had previously functioned on the lineage level to the level of the state. The tribal chief or head of the sub-tribe was responsible for the care and feeding of the poor. The necessary sums were obtained from a portion of the booty allocated to him for such purposes. He was also responsible for hospitality to strangers. Under Islam, care for the poor as well as the responsibility for entertaining strangers was shifted to the level of the state.

The use of taxation for this purpose led to an argument among scholars as to whether Mohammed could be called a socialist.[180] It must be pointed out that Mohammed did not touch the basic dynamic of the society which had produced him. To followers who feared that combining the religious pilgrimage with irreligious trade might be a sacrilege, he is supposed to have said: "There are no sins for you during the festivals of pilgrimage."[181] Mohammed, Abu Bekr, and Omar all owed their personal wealth to trade. Torrey has pointed to the abundance of "commercial-theological" terms in the Koran.[182] Mohammed and his adherents continued to trade while in exile in Medina, an often over-looked fact.[183] Continued trade, as well as the plundering of Meccan caravans, fortified the position of the faithful in Medina, where wide-travelled merchants were used as well as valued spies and informers on other areas.[184] Mohammed, did, however, transfer to the state the responsibility for the care of the poor whose status had become increasingly exploitative under the guise of traditional kin relationships. We have seen above that he declared all interest payments stemming from pagan times to be null and void. Usury was made illegal: "God hath allowed selling, but forbidden usury."[185] Both acts seem to have been aimed at undercutting the Koreish power and raising resistance against it. Poor Muhajjirīn were also granted a special part of the spoils,[186] and poor Muslims were assigned land.[187]

Non-Muslims paid a special tax, but were integrated into the new state with-

177 *Idem*, p. 31.
178 *Idem*, p. 13.
179 *Idem*, p. 15.
180 Grimme, 1892; Snouck Hurgronje, 1894, pp. 48-70, 149-178.
181 Bukhāri, 1903-14, p. 20.
182 Torrey, 1892.
183 Lammens, 1924, pp. 257-260.
184 *Ibid.*
185 Koran 2, 276; p. 369.
186 Koran 59, 8; p. 432.
187 Bālādhuri 1916-24, vol. 1, p. 37.

out forced conversion. Where they resisted the encroachment of the new state by force, they were indeed subjected to serious economic disabilities, as, for example, were the Jews of Khaibar.[188] But the popular notion that the beginnings of Islam were marked by wholesale conversions, achieved by force, is wholly unwarranted. The Koran says: "Dispute not, unless in kindly sort, with the people of the Book; save with such of them as have wrongfully dealt with you,"[189] and "let there be no compulsion in religion."[190] If these non-Muslims paid taxes, as did the Christians of Aila, the Jews of Adruh, Garba, and Makna, and the Jewish and Christian communities of southern Arabia, their security was guaranteed. They became "people [living] under contractually guaranteed protection."[191] Such relationships had previously been phrased in terms of kin or ritual kin relationships between patrons and clients, as in the case of the protective relation in existence between the Jewish communities of Medina and Khaibar and their Bedouin patrons.[192] Under Islam, this type of relation was transferred to the level of the state.

Conversion to Islam was in fact not primarily a religious demand, but a political one. During the initial Medinese period

> Mohammed does not call on the tribes to convert themselves to Islam. . . . He concludes with them pacts of protection and mutual aid in aggression, in which he guarantees his clients security of person and property and promises them the protection of God and his messenger. In exchange, they assume the duty of putting themselves at the disposal of the prophet when he calls on them to fight. Excepted are wars in the cause of religion![193]

Only after the unsuccessful siege of Medina by the Koreish did Mohammed begin to demand that affiliated tribes take on Islam "as a sign of political affiliation."[194] Conversion

> only served as a manifestation of political affiliation with Mohammed and remained therefore limited to the circles which sought this affiliation. The remainder paid the *gizja* [the special tax paid by non-Muslims]. Mohammed was more interested in the tax which these tribes brought in than in their belief.[195]

Mohammed was statesman enough to grant the status of Muhaǰǰirīn to the Aslam, a tribe which owned pasture grounds on the road from Medina to Mecca and without whose coöperation the war against the Koreish could not have been

188 Ibn Hishām, 1864, vol. 2, p. 170 ff.
189 Koran 29, 45; p. 265.
190 Koran, 2, 257; p. 367.
191 Buhl, 1930, p. 346.
192 Lammens, 1928, pp. 70-71, 79.
193 Sperber, 1916, p. 4.
194 *Idem*, p. 5.
195 *Ibid*.

carried on,[196] and to permit the inhabitants of Taif to include the sacred precinct around their pagan sanctuary into the sacred precinct of Mecca, thus getting the same prerogatives as the inhabitants of Mecca.[197] Within the various tribal groups and settlements which joined Mohammed, only certain minorities accepted Islam as a religious faith. These were usually groups attempting to improve their status within their own societies.[198] Mohammed had already begun in Mecca to "introduce himself to individuals [among the Bedouins] of whom he knew that they were held in great esteem and to lecture them about his vision of God's guidance and mercy."[199] The use of the state treasury to win over such interested nomad leaders is implied in the Koran:

> But alms are to be given only to the poor and needy, and to those who collect them, and to those whose hearts are won for Islam, and for ransoms, and for debtors, and for the cause of God, and the wayfarer.[200]

The inclusion of petty chiefs in participation in booty served to attract

> ambitious shieks who were then interested in spreading Islam among the members of their tribe. These in turn sought their allies among the Muslims, in order to maintain themselves against the ruling families with their help.[201]

Their titles to properties and perquisites acquired through their affiliation with Islam depended on the continued existence of the Islamic state, and were strengthened by the progress of Islam. When the death of Mohammed threatened the young state with disintegration, these minorities acted to keep the tribal groups within the new structure. Victory was based on the ability of the Muslims to keep the adherence of

> the loyal minorities among the Bedouin tribes, with whom they were superior to the majorities, because these never allied themselves, nor closed their ranks with determination. . . . There were also Bedouins who, together with the Muslims, carried on successful operations against dissenters within their own tribe.[202]

The alliance with Bedouin tribes, finally, enabled the young state to challenge the dominant powers along the Arab periphery. This task would have been impossible without the active coöperation of tribes in Syria[203] and tribes ranging along the Persian frontier.[204]

The center of the Islamic state, however, remained in the settled communities,

196 *Idem*, pp. 18-19.
197 *Idem*, p. 72.
198 *Idem*, pp. 33-79, *passim*.
199 Ibn Hishām, 1864, vol. 1, p. 211.
200 Koran 9, 60; p. 477.
201 Sperber, 1916, p. 74.
202 Wellhausen, 1884-99, vol. 6, p. 11.
203 Kremer, 1875-77, pp. 85-96.
204 Musil, 1927, pp. 284-285, 292.

where it had originated. It might be said that the state was "oasis-bound." Marçais has noted that

> if the Muslim army contingents . . . comprised a nomad majority, the cadres were recruited among the settled people of the Hejaz, Medinese agriculturists, town merchants of Mecca and Taif.[205]

Von Grunebaum states:

> Islam, from its very outset unfolding in an urban milieu, favored city development. The legislation of the Koran envisages city life. The nomad is viewed with distrust. . . . Only in a city, that is, a settlement harboring a central mosque, jami', fit for the Friday service and a market (and preferably a public bath) can all the requirements of the faith be properly fulfilled. Migration into town, hijra, is recommended and almost equalized in merit to that more famous migration, again called hijra, of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina. To forsake town for country is severely condemned.[206]

## CONCLUSION

Our brief historical survey has shown that the tendencies which Mohammed brought to fruition were reaching their peak of development in pre-Islamic times. Commercial development in urban settlements had caused the emergence of class groupings from the preceding network of kin relations. Centralization of worship and the emergence of a deity specifically linked with the regulation of non-kin relations as the chief deity went hand in hand with the centralization of trade and the disintegration of the kinship structure. Yet in the political sphere, the use of kinship mechanisms in situations which increasingly exposed their non-functional character in the new setting led to disruption and conflict, rather that to further organization and consolidation.

The religious revolution associated with the name of Mohammed permitted the establishment of an incipient state structure. It replaced allegiance to the kinship unit with allegiance to a state structure, an allegiance phrased in religious terms. It limited the disruptive exercise of the kin-based mechanism of the blood feud. It put an end to the extension of ritual kin ties to serve as links between tribes. It based itself instead on the armed force of the faithful as the core of a social order which included both believers and unbelievers. It evolved a rudimentary judicial authority, patterned after the role of the pre-Islamic soothsayer, but possessed of new significance. The limitation of the blood feud permitted war to emerge as a special prerogative of the state power. The state taxed both Muslims and non-Muslims, in ways patterned after pre-Islamic models, but to

205 Marçais, 1928, p. 88.

206 Von Grunebaum, 1946, pp. 173-174.

new ends. Finally, it located the center of the state in urban settlements, surrounding the town with a set of religious symbols that served functionally to increase its prestige and role.

The revolution accomplished, power quickly passed out of the hands of the armed brotherhood of the faithful into the hands of the Koreish who had fought against them. It may be said that Mohammed accomplished for the Meccan traders that which they could not accomplish themselves: the organization of state power.

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# CULTURE, LANGUAGE, AND THE HUMAN ORGANISM

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IF SCHOLARLY FIELDS were arranged in an eschelon series, the more general would be rated the higher. Mathematics is the queen of the sciences—because a mathematical statement can be the most general statement obtainable in science. In a preceding generation, when it was fashionable for sociologists to formulate theories applicable to societies in general, sociology was said to be the queen of the social sciences.

In descriptive reporting, our own society received the attention of sociologists, while the rest of the world fell into the hands of anthropologists. Armed with a universal measuring rod, anthropologists have attempted to take the cultural measurement of all societies—and most recently, including our own society—either by way of generalizing statements and observations of a few informants (ethnographic studies), by cautious sampling (community studies), by incautious generalizations with anecdotal supporting statements (national character studies), or by a combination of all field work methods (area studies). The fact that the anthropological measurements are being made with the coöperation of other disciplines, especially psychology and sociology, is reflected in such terms as sociocultural wholes, the psychobiological nature of man, ethnolinguistics, ethnobotany, ethnozoölogy, and so on.

The great power and the great attractiveness of "culture" can be attributed precisely to this feature of broad applicability. Culture is the most general term yet applied to describe the activities of human beings. Second only to culture in importance is communication; without communication, culture dies.

## COMMUNICATION AND TRANSLATION

As the twentieth century grows older, and as descriptive reporting continues in ethnography (and in community, and national character, and area studies), it becomes increasingly possible to study the span of communication which exists from the point of view of any particular tribe, community, nation, or area. Such recognitions of different sized worlds may be designated as variously sized communication spans. Thus, at the time described in our North American ethnographies, the communication span among the Plains Indians was extraordinarily wide. And it was after all in the Plains that the sign language flourished—and neutralized numerous linguistic barriers. The celebrated (one might say superla-

tive) number of linguistic barriers in California resulted in a characteristically narrow communication span among the numerous tribelets—narrowest of all along the Klamath River. To the north of California, however, the communication span of the coastwise tribes widens again, and this may be associated with the use of an auxiliary language—Chinook jargon—which, in turn, may be associated with coast and up-river economic exchange, and also with the kind of warfare which eventuates in adopting captives as slaves and spouses. Among Old World cultures, those in the ancient Mediterranean world had wide communication spans, and many languages, but also many bilingual speakers; later, during Osmanli times, the dragoman standing guard before doorways could converse with visitors in any of a dozen or a score of different languages. Diversity of languages is correlated with a narrow communication span in some areas, with a wide span in others.

If it were theoretically expectable that a communication span should, in the general case, extend to and include cultures sharing the same language—but fall short of and tend to exclude cultures having different languages—then it would be expectable that the languages of the world and the cultures of the world would total about the same number at any given time. They do not: there are almost twice as many separate culture units as separate languages to be counted in the ethnographic present time. The director of the Human Relations Area Files is one of the authors of the statement: "There are today some three to four thousand peoples whose cultures are sufficiently distinctive to be considered independent units."[1] In his summary of the number of languages of the world, Sturtevant totals various estimates made by regional specialists, and finds the grand total to be two thousand.[2] Bloomfield gives us the number of speakers of many languages of the world; their numbers vary enormously.[3]

It was Bloomfield who taught us to use the criterion of neighbor-intelligibility rather than mutual-intelligibility when discussing the geographic range of a single language. Though each pair of neighboring dialects may be intelligible to each other, geographically distant dialects may be quite unintelligible one to another and still be counted as belonging to a single language. Where the languages being investigated are the native languages of the scholars doing the investigation —as in Europe and India and China—participant observation can be relied upon to tell us which pair of dialects are intelligible and which are not. However, in areas in which we study languages rather than converse in them fluently, we are

1 Clellan S. Ford and Frank A. Beach, *Patterns of Sexual Behavior* (New York 1951), p. 5.
2 Edgar H. Sturtevant, *An Introduction to Linguistic Science* (New Haven, 1947), p. 41.
3 Leonard Bloomfield, *Language* (New York, 1933), pp. 57-73.

perforce content to ask the informant about dialect intelligibility, and to check the informant's judgment with casual estimates or detailed counts of sameness as revealed by analysis of the dialects compared. To supplement this, Harris and the present writer have recently suggested a field method for testing the informant, a method now being used in the investigation of dialects of Iroquois languages, Algonquian languages, and Siouan languages.[4] Essentially, the method abandons the yes-no choice in asking a speaker from community A whether he can understand a speaker from community B, and replaces this two-way choice with a continuum in communications rating. The rating is based on how much information a speaker in community A can obtain from magnetic recordings of utterances from speakers of communities B, C, D—as well as from other speakers in his own community A. So long as any information is obtained—even though it be restricted to the recognition of a folkloristic character, for example, or to an international scientific term, to take another example—it is accepted as more than zero in a communications rating; so also, when the information obtained is incorrect (from the point of view of a linguist's translation), it is rated rather than discarded. Thus, one may experiment with comparing two languages, like Shawnee and Kickapoo, which would ordinarily be regarded as distinctly separate languages from a synchronic point of view, but diachronically, as closely related sister languages of the Algonquian family.

Suppose our speaker A is a Shawnee Indian who can speak only one other language, namely English. We now confront A with the playback of B's utterances in Kickapoo, and then immediately ask A to tell us what information he obtained from B's utterances. If A obliges by giving us first a Shawnee rendition, and second an English rendition, we can compare A's Shawnee version with B's Kickapoo version, and we can further compare A's English version of Kickapoo with our own English version of Kickapoo. Transformations of information are obviously involved—units of Shawnee or units of English are substituted for units of Kickapoo. Communications engineers might call this *codification;* we might call all this *translation.*

But we should hasten to add that when Shawnee speaker A gives his rendition of B's Kickapoo utterances (whether in Shawnee or in English), we prefer the more restricted term, *interpreter translation.* To avoid the possibility of confusion between what the Shawnee does and what we do, we shall call our own rendition into English (whether from Kickapoo or from Shawnee) the *linguistic translation.*

4 C. F. Voegelin and Zellig S. Harris, *Methods for Determining Intelligibility among Dialects of Natural languages* (Proceedings, American Philosophical Society, vol. 95, 1951), pp. 322-329.

As a matter of fact, the linguist makes two kinds of translations: first a morpheme by morpheme translation (also known as a literal translation), and then a free translation. Even the last, the free translation, is more or less awkward. It is more awkward when the linguist tries to force into his English version all the information which he finds in his Kickapoo texts, including what is paradigmatically marked (the meaning distinction between one set of forms in opposition to another set of forms—in addition to the specific meaning of the single morpheme from the set which appears in the text), and including also what is differentially marked (the shift or addition or reduction in meaning of certain morphemes when co-occurring with certain other morphemes—in addition to the specific meaning of the morpheme in question in all distributions other than the co-occurrent one). The free translation is less awkward when the linguist deliberately excludes from his English version some of the information which he can obtain from his Kickapoo texts—when he is content to give a rough summary of the preliminary morpheme translation out of Kickapoo.

Whether including as much information as possible in his free translation, or deliberately excluding some part of the obtainable information, the linguist—in both cases—cannot help but introduce pseudo-information into his English translation because English grammar commits him to certain obligatory oppositions which are optional in Kickapoo. If the linguist were to translate from Kickapoo to Shawnee, however, it would be unnecessary (or scarcely necessary) for him to introduce such pseudo-information into his translation: the grammars of both of these languages tend to make the same obligatory commitments and tend to enjoy the same systematic choices.

The *linguistic translation*—of whichever subvariety—proceeds from morpheme to utterance; the *interpreter translation* proceeds from utterance to certain morphemes—sometimes to one morpheme. All field workers have had the experience of putting a question to a monolingual informant through the medium of a bilingual interpreter; the informant speaks long and earnestly and the interpreter finally gives an *interpreter translation:* "He say yes." In my own experience with recorded *interpreter translations,* I am impressed with the lacunae which appear characteristic for certain interpreters and for different languages being translated into English. Sentence introducers and quotatives, for example, will be almost universally omitted; introductory phrases and whole batches of morphemes will sometimes be omitted from the translation even when, upon prompting, the interpreter proves that he is competent to translate them.

All this stands in contrast to testing *interpreter translations* between such lan-

guages as Shawnee and Kickapoo where the Shawnee interpreter would presumably lack such competence (except, of course, when a given Shawnee individual has lived among the Kickapoo and learned their language in addition to his own; such learning is not likely to result from casual visiting since English is nowadays used as a *lingua franca*). *Interpreter translations* pose fascinating problems of their own, but such problems are not apt to become the immediate concern of communications engineers.

What such engineers want to work with, as already mentioned, is a codification in which one event—as one morpheme of one language—can be substituted for another event—as one morpheme in another language. Events have to be reduced to substitutable units, for some purposes to digits. Since linguistic analysis gives us coördinate units—as a finite number of phonemes and a manageable number of morphemes for each language—it appears more feasible to make a codification of linguistic units than to codify the infinite variety of content found in any given culture whole.[5] *Interpreter translations* would be difficult to codify. Difficult also would be the linguist's free translation, with its deliberate exclusion of certain bits of information and its intrusion of pseudo-information. Perhaps least objectionable for codification would be the units obtained in a morpheme by morpheme translation.

Assume that we have a large sample of utterances in Shawnee and Kickapoo, with morpheme by morpheme translations from one to the other, and from each to English. Assume also that we have available a digital computer with a "memory" or series of registers to store our information (like freight cars put on many different sidings, according to Berkeley—only they can be switched in a second from one siding to another, as from Input Registers to Storage Registers, to Computer Registers and to Output Registers).[6] For codification we number and classify the morphemes, and feed the numbers into the Input Register, and then direct the Computer to put certain numbers in different Storage Registers according to their morpheme classes. When a single morpheme of one language is translatable by a single morpheme from another language, a single code number will serve for both morphemes; separate Storage Registers will serve

5 As they are presently conceived, communications studies seem centered in single cultures and even in single complexes of social organization within a single culture matrix; accessible facts of interpersonal communication are compared to inaccessible analogues in intrapersonal communication—this has interest for the psychiatrist; and the non-randomness of the Second Law of Thermodynamics having to do with "negative entropy" is relevant to statements about values—"poetically" rather than "mathematically" relevant—as is shown by Jurgen Ruesch and Gregory Bateson, *Communication: the Social Matrix of Psychiatry* (New York, 1951).

6 Edmund C. Berkeley, *Simple Simon* (Scientific American, vol. 183, no. 5, 1951), p. 42.

for morphemes found in Shawnee without a gloss in Kickapoo, for example. We next give three sets of directions to the Computer Registers: these directions are in effect the rules for permissable combinations of morphemes according to Shawnee structure, Kickapoo structure, and English structure. Finally, we could attach a decoder to the Output Registers which would then select, from a concordance, the appropriate morphemes magnetically recorded for each language.

We would ask the machine to translate for us, or even to compose new utterances. The latter should be grammatically possible, at least; the only limitation would be in the range of morphemes which we codified and placed in the computer's ample Storage Registers. Two of the computers in Bell Telephone Laboratories "can conceive of 351,000,002 numbers"—enough to store the codified morphemes of several languages; and we need only give the computers a fair start in translating and working out the combinatorial possibilities of a given language because "Many of the machines can work out more than 95 percent of their own instructions."[7]

## THE DEFINITIONAL NATURE OF CULTURE

In effect, Tylor invented the term "culture" for anthropology; like zoölogists in their use of "animal" to cover everything they study, we have, since Tylor, used the term "culture" to cover everything in anthropology designated as archaeological, ethnographic, or even linguistic. A few years ago Julian Steward spoke of a language which seems to have strayed out of South America as an ethnographic trait; and more recently Hallowell has spoken of linguistic change as a cultural event, while Swadesh says unequivocally that language is a culture complex.[8]

The context for Steward's equation is simple: ". . . the cultural flow was predominantly from South America. This is evidenced by such archaeological traits as stone cist graves . . . and by such ethnographic traits as the Chibcha language, burial of subjects with a chief, mummification, platform beds, and gold-copper alloys."[9]

The context of Hallowell's equation is involved in the question as to whether we can keep cultural events separate from psychological events in acculturational situations: ". . . his [the anthropologist's] attention has been focused upon the

7 *Idem*, p. 40.

8 Morris Swadesh, *Diffusional Cumulation and Archaic Residue as Historical Explanations* (Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, vol. 7, pp. 1-21, 1951), p. 1.

9 Julian H. Steward, *American Culture History in the Light of South America* (Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, vol. 3, pp. 85-107, 1947), p. 96.

observation and description of cultural events such as changes in technology, dress, food habits, kinship systems, beliefs, language, etc., rather than upon psychological events. . . . Surely iron tools may be substituted for those made of stone, or one style of dress replace another or a new language be learned without any radical effect upon personality organization."[10]

In his comprehensive essay on the work of Edward Sapir—and on the attitudinal climate in which Sapir worked—Harris has shown that, in the actual handling of cultural data and interpretations, Sapir was inclined to treat culture as a special aspect or close analogue of language—mostly with happy results, but sometimes with the result that Sapir understated the vitality of culture:

> Certainly his linguistic experience may have influenced him to give more weight to cultural inertia (or lag) than is its due. In language, of course, this seems an unquestionable fact. Not only is there a barely changing persistence of grammatical structure, but there is also the "adaptive persistence" of vocabulary. . . . [In the *Time Perspective*] the method used in reconstructing the purely cultural chronology is closely related to the methods of historical linguistics.[11]

The latter, in their reliance on form as a point of departure, cannot utilize some methods in culture history which appear applicable exclusively to culture—Kroeber's stimulus diffusion, for example. The restrictive influence of linguistic methods on Sapir's treatment of culture no longer applied once Sapir had been fairly launched in operating with personality *vis à vis* culture.

In a certain sense, Kroeber's inclination is conversely parallel to Sapir's. Throughout the new chapters on culture in Kroeber's 1948 *Anthropology* there are scattered statements about language illustrating this or that special aspect of culture, though the chapter on "Language" itself is unrevised since 1923.[12]

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10 A. I. Hallowell, *The Use of Projective Techniques in the Study of the Socio-psychological Aspects of Acculturation* (Journal of Projective Techniques, vol. 15, 1951), pp. 29-30.

11 Zellig S. Harris, *Review of "Selected Writings of Edward Sapir," edited by David G. Mandelbaum* (Language, vol. 27, pp. 288-333, 1951), p. 312.

12 A. L. Kroeber, *Anthropology: Race, Language, Culture, Psychology, Prehistory* (New York, 1948), chapters 7, 8, 9, 10 and 15; Chapter V: "Language" in the 1923 edition corresponds almost entirely to Chapter VI: "Language" in the 1948 edition; chapter sub-sections may be equated—47 = 93; 48 = 94; 49 = 95 ("predominating regularity" in comparative linguistics is replaced by a non-statistical or unqualified "regularity—part-for-part correspondence, the biologist would say"); 50 = 96 (change from "most civilized" to "longest-civilized" for the cultural status of Hungarian among its Finno-Ugric siblings); 51 = 97 (personality characterization of "philologists" deleted); 52 = 98; 53 = 99; 54 = 100; 55 = 101 (one paragraph expanded to three, including new information twice repeated that anthropologists "are in general agreement" or at least that those who "have grappled with the problem" now have a belief that "language grew up in correlation with culture"); 56 = 102 (in 1923 it was "a commonplace that the arguing of connection between the three factors of race, language, and culture [or na-

One of the results of the growth and prestige of anthropology since World War II is that everybody has learned what anthropologists mean by "culture," including pure linguists; anthropological definitions have been known to be cited for the benefit of anthropologists who are not sufficiently orthodox in this matter. The new secretary of the Linguistic Society of America would define linguistics not merely as a branch of anthropology but, more specifically, as a branch of "cultural anthropology"; another linguist, cited in the same article, speaks of linguistics as a branch of, or rather, a kind of mathematics.[13] These two affiliations are not contradictory: operationally, linguistic study belongs to mathematics; substantively, to anthropology or, if one prefers, to cultural anthropology. Is there any reason to suppose that something more than preferences in definitions are involved?

So far as usage is concerned the matter is trivial; there is not even a danger of ambiguity. When a zoölogist tells me that he would like to have been along on the Kon-Tiki voyage "to watch the animals," I know he means animals in the ocean, mostly fishes—not his fellow passengers. When the title of a modern monograph is *Language of the Sierra Miwok,* I know the work will be on the linguistic structure—not on the culture of the Sierra Miwok.[14] Conversely, before I open the covers of a monograph called *Nomlaki Ethnography,* I can predict that the work will consist of cultural detail on the Nomlaki (either in the form of a catalogue of culture elements or in some more discursive form); and I can predict negatively, with as much certainty, that not one whit of information on the linguistic structure of Nomlaki will be given, and that such scattered words (and possibly brief utterances) as are cited will not be recorded in terms of the

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tionality], the making of inferences from one to the other, is logically unsound" and this is paraphrased in 1948; in addition, of the factors "which operate to produce nationalities, language is on the whole much the most important"); 57 = 103; 58 =104; 59 = 105 (with discussion of *r* deleted); some rearrangements in sections are found since 60 = 108, 61 = 109, 62 = 110, 63 = 111, but 64 = 106, and 107 is introduced. This means that the chapter final section is shifted from 64 (now 106) to 111 (formerly 63), ending now with what is the most interpretive section in the entire chapter, a section which is psychoanalytically oriented ("the motive power of behavior in man as in the other animals is affective and unconscious"); and which suggests that the effect an individual can produce on the shape or content of his culture (when he exercises the alternatives presented by that culture) is just about as inconsequential as the effect he produces on the structure or vocabulary of his language (when he exercises the alternatives which his language presents to him)—impressions to the contrary merely reflect an unwillingness in some of us to recognize our "near impotence."

13 Archibald A. Hill, "Toward a Literary Analysis" (in *Studies in Honor of J. S. Wilson,* Rocky Mount, Va., 1951), p. 149, quoting Martin Joos, pp. 140-150.

14 L. S. Freeland, *Language of the Sierra Miwok* (Indiana University Publications in Anthropology and Linguistics, Memoir 6, 1951).

Nomlaki language (that is, not phonemically) but will rather be recorded arbitrarily in terms of a first approximation to sounds measured by a universal standard irrespective of any particular language (that is, phonetically).[15]

So far as theory and operational methods are concerned, the matter is nontrivial. In zoölogy, by means of reductionism, man and infrahuman animals may be equated. But how does *language* achieve its status as a *species* of the *genus culture* in anthropology? From Tylor onwards, this achievement appears to have been chiefly definitional. The definitions begin with behavior; whatever else is included can be designated as successive or occasional restrictions, which are listed in the following paraphrase from various definitions of culture: not all of behavior, but only [1] learned behavior; not all of learned behavior, but only [2] that which is transmitted or is transmissable from generation to generation; not the entire heritage of learned behavior, but only [3] that which is diffusable; not all learned, inheritable, diffusable behavior, but only behavior thus restricted which is [4] supervised and directed by human beings; not only behavior restricted in some or all of these four ways, but only [5] statements about such behavior abstracted by persons who may be outside the society investigated (social scientists), or [6] the actual behavior of participant persons as well as statements about such behavior made by persons who are participants of the society investigated. The first and second restrictions apply to language as well as to culture—one might just as well say, then, to language and to the rest of culture. As listed above, the remaining restrictions appear to me to be inspired by culturalists who are at the same time non-linguists, and who have, by providing these additional restrictions, made it more or less difficult to both include language and also to maintain the rigor of their definitions.

Of strictly modern definitions, perhaps the briefest is Linton's much cited statement that culture is "the sum total of the behaviors of a society's members in so far as these behaviors are learned and shared."[16] This includes our first restriction (and an allusion to society, the behaviors being shared); other definitions include more restrictions on behavior than this. The tendency in anthropological theory is surely in the direction of more and more restrictions. Thus, Steward's rather center-of-the-road definition includes our first three restrictions, as listed above: "Culture is generally understood to mean [1] learned modes of behavior [2] which are socially transmitted from one generation to

15 Walter Goldschmidt, *Nomlaki Ethnography* (University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology, vol. 42, no. 4, 1951).

16 Ralph Linton, *The Cultural Background of Personality* (New York, 1945), p. 46.

another within particular societies and [3] which may be diffused from one society to another."[17]

The strictly cultural evidence suffices to justify the third restriction in a general definition: culture elements and culture complexes—and these in massive doses—readily diffuse from society to society; descriptive arrangements in terms of culture areas reflect this; sharp lines of demarcation between culture areas are rarely found. Sharp lines of demarcation between one language and another are characteristic rather than rare, and the well-known controversy between Boas and Sapir hinged on the question as to whether structural similarity in a linguistic area reflects diffusion, or whether it provides evidence for distant genetic relationship. The strictly linguistic evidence is insufficient to justify this third restriction in a general definition.

Even for vocabulary, diffusion is best stated in terms of open morpheme classes in particular languages, like English, which are hospitable to borrowing words—and some of us suspect that such hospitable languages are rare among languages of the world. The inhospitable languages, then, either exhibit what Sapir called "adaptive persistence" (keeping their old words to bear new information) or else resort to loan translations. Bilingual speakers of such languages (with their second language being English) not only refuse to borrow English words into their native language, but extend the same courtesy to English: they refrain from intruding words from their own language into English. It is the anthropologist who interlards his English discussion with their native words. For the anthropologist, this interlarding is an act of hospitality—as a committee of one, he enlarges the English vocabulary, at least for purposes of field work. Such hospitality is sometimes accepted as something like a joke by those who are brought up speaking languages whose vocabulary does not readily diffuse from one society to another.

Our fourth restriction, above, is taken from Bidney's anthropoculture; this has evolutionary implications, and hence is more appropriate for purely cultural data, with its long attested accessible prehistory, than for linguistic data, with its shallow history (from the time that writing was invented), and its shallow prehistory (safe reconstructions of languages spoken today probably do not succeed in obtaining any greater antiquity than the earliest written languages). If Bidney is to be read literally when he says ". . . every stage of the anthropocultural

17 Julian H. Steward, *Area Research: Theory and Practice* (Bulletin, Social Science Research Council, no. 63, 1950), p. 98.

process is supervised and directed . . ."[18] then he is not talking about language. Parents who move from one dialect area to another may attempt to supervise and direct their children to speak the dialect of their origin; the French Academy and the Spanish Academy may publish prescriptive rules to supervise and direct the speakers of their respective countries. And perhaps, by 1984, some authority —though probably not parents or academies—may succeed, particularly if models in mass communication are exploited. The mere weight of repetition in the hearing of our own language (repetitive models, as provided by our age mates rather than by our parents, and by our everyday associates rather than by academicians) far outweighs anything which is ordinarily understood as supervision and direction in influencing language.

Our fifth restriction, above, is made by Kluckhohn, Gillin, Linton, and others; it is variously called a logical construct or a culture construct. (I am reminded of Preston's terminological innovation: statementology.[19]) Grammars are, of course, nothing more than this. But here is the rub: any such construct which is adequate for the language of a given society says nothing directly about the rest of the culture;[20] and a construct which adequately treats the purely cultural aspects of a given society would never be mistaken for a description of the language spoken in that society.

Our sixth restriction, above, is a restatement which combines Linton's "real culture" and also his "ideal patterns." With the advent of the sonograph and Joos' speech-stretcher, it may be possible to say that acoustical phonetics investigates the "real language" while phonemics gives a "language construct," so far as sounds are concerned. It seems unlikely, however, that anything parallel to "ideal patterns" would be found in linguistic investigation, for speakers are notoriously unconscious of what they do when they speak; prescriptive grammars and books or booklets advertised in Sunday editions of our newspapers "to improve your English" thinly disguise their genuine offer: to improve your upward mobility in a class society by pointing out that the lower classes (said to be incorrect) say "sibboleth," while the upper class (said to be correct) say "shibboleth." Here, as in the Biblical allusion, all that is involved is the prestige or safety which the use of one dialect rather than another insures. Nothing, actually, is said about the "ideal patterns" of either dialect.

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18 David Bidney, *Human Nature and the Cultural Process* (American Anthropologist, vol. 49, pp. 375-399, 1947), p. 376.

19 Bidney, *op. cit.*, pp. 376-377, quoting Clyde Kluckhohn, John Gillin, Ralph Linton; and W. D. Preston, personal communication.

20 Subtle, indirect connections are shown in ethnolinguistics.

## LEARNED BEHAVIOR, WITH AND WITHOUT LANGUAGE

Language and culture are certainly in the realm of behavior, and learned behavior at that. Theoretical discussion proceeds almost entirely from behavioral data, almost to the exclusion of data concerned with localization of functions in cortical areas of the brain, or of data concerned with analogous mechanical brains, such as the digital and analogue computers. In contrast, the phylogenetic relationship of humans to their relatives in the animal kingdom has received more detailed illumination from anatomical than from behavioral data.

Behaviorally, and quite aside from taxonomy, subhuman animals can be compared to one another in respect to solving intelligence tests. (Or they can be compared to each other as well as to man in respect to some non-laboratory activities which they all share, as for example, sexual activity or food gathering.) First, there are the well-known intelligence tests for animals. According to the latest laboratory experiments, dogs are a little more intelligent than cats, and both of these animals make much better scores on the quadruple-choice test than the horse who may turn out to rank below the pig and the elephant; and of course primates rank well above carnivores and ungulates, while humans score so incomparably higher than their anatomically closest relatives that a laboratory test which distinguishes among great apes, for example, does not really test humans at all—that is, adult humans can easily learn all the various activities which prove to be discriminatory hurdles for other primates, and which may be too difficult for subprimates to attempt. Behavior theorists have naturally been aware of the fact that human language served as an incomparable aid to memory, particularly in solving delayed reaction tests, and that the lack of such a language imposed an upper limit in the performance of the most intelligent apes. Clark Hull once suggested that since infrahuman primates failed to learn human language even after being prodded in this direction by primatologists, it might be theoretically interesting to try to teach chimpanzees in a laboratory a simple sign language to see whether or not, thus equipped, they might not exceed all previous scores in operating complex "chipomats" or other machines comparable to our gymnasium lockers in which we have to remember a series of turn-left-turn-right combinations.[21]

The fact that animals learn certain activities in a laboratory shows that they have the capacity to learn, and this is taken as a true measure of intelligence. The "certain activities" which they learn would be classified as cultural activities

21 Clark Hull in seminar, Yale University, *circa* 1935.

if, first, they were performed by humans (pushing and pulling baby carriages with other chimpanzees or children in them; manipulating tooth brush, hair brush, spoon, cup, faucets; smoking cigars and cigarettes); and, secondly, if one generation of chimpanzees taught the next generation what—by virtue of their true intelligence—they had learned. The second condition has not been demonstrated; hence at least one comparative psychologist argues that though chimpanzees show true intelligence ("the capacity to learn, regardless of the method involved"), the limitation on greater and greater intelligence among apes is the limitation of developing culture through transmitting what is learned from one generation to the next; in contrast, for man "The culture process was slow in starting, but once under way it operated at an increasingly rapid pace, without the need for further biological evolution . . . that sets him apart from all the other animals."[22] So eloquent a title for a book as *Man and His Works* would not be appropriate for a book on anthropoid apes who fail to produce culture monuments comparable to the works of man; but we would argue, in the spirit of Clark Hull, that the limitation on developing greater and greater intelligence ("capacity to learn") among apes is not the lack of culture in general but, specifically, the lack of language.

The kind of simplified language which Clark Hull recommended for teaching to apes had this characteristic of human languages: it consisted of a system of discrete units in which one or more units might be held constant while one or more units varied; these units (or morphemes, as we say in linguistic analysis) might be produced by hands and feet rather than by lungs, larynx, mouth and nose. The last named organs are not very different in humans and in chimpanzees; in fact, the lips of chimpanzees are more extensible than those of man, and should therefore function exceptionally well in producing rounded vowels. Occasional chimpanzees and other apes have been taught to make a few utterances of the general shape consonant-vowel-consonant—an approximation of English "cup," for example.[23] What one primatological teacher seems not to comprehend, however, is that his single-morpheme-uttering chimpanzee still falls short of having any language at all, regardless of whether other associations are made with the utterance in question (such as reaching for a cup). The criterion for a language is that there be variability within a fixed frame. Subhuman utterances, however long they may be, are functionally single morphemes. In contrast, every human language shows variability within fixed frames. The first parrot who is

22 Carl J. Warden, *Animal Intelligence* (Scientific American, vol. 184, no. 6, 1951), p. 68.

23 For a brief summary of how primates resist primatologists who try to teach them to talk, see Earnest Albert Hooton, *Up from the Ape* (New York, 1946), pp. 160-161.

able to hold one part of its traditional utterance constant ("polly wants a . . .") and vary the end of the traditional utterance ("a cracker" replaced by "a drink" depending on whether the bird is hungry or thirsty) will have achieved language, whether or not the achievement is under laboratory conditions.

The human organism has no unique organs of speech, but it is unique in its production of morpheme variability within a fixed morpheme frame. The same human organism is, in contrast, not entirely unique in its exercise of non-verbal cultural activities. Infrahuman animals can learn human culture either under strict laboratory conditions or when acculturational-like conditions are favorable. For example, the Kelloggs' child was not advanced beyond his chimpanzee playmate up to the time the child could talk; thereafter, the use of the language would enable the child to outstrip the chimpanzee in all learning.[24] If Herskovits will allow us to use enculturation in application to infrahuman animals,[25] we will say that the chimpanzee's evident satisfaction with human culture prevented him from enculturating when he was returned to a zoo: that experience proved fatal.

If there is any agreement among anthropologists, it is that *all culture is learned behavior;* but as already noted, additional conditions are generally invoked before learned behavior is granted the status of culture. If ever the converse statement were made *(that all learned behavior is culture),* it would necessarily imply that infrahuman animals have culture. Though such animals are acknowledged to be non-verbal creatures, they are sometimes said to be able to teach each other.. That combination—learned behavior and taught-by-same-species-behavior—has been incorporated into a formal statement with theoretical consequences. The statement is: "All animals which are capable of learning and teaching one another are capable of acquiring culture."[26] The second limitation here ("teaching one another") is meant to preclude from consideration the kind of learning described by comparative psychologists who limit themselves to laboratory conditions and who therefore are themselves the human teachers of their subhuman pupils. That animals do learn from one another is, however, and as a matter of fact, more difficult to show than that they learn from humans. But granting that they do both, we can then say that in all environments—in their natural habitat, in acculturational-like situations (as in *The Ape and the Child*), and under rigorous laboratory conditions—subhuman animals learn without benefit of language. This is certainly suggestive for evolutionary theory.

24 Winthrop and Luella Kellogg, *The Ape and the Child* (New York, 1933).
25 Melville J. Herskovits, *Man and His Works* (New York, 1948), p. 41.
26 Bidney, *Human Nature and the Cultural Process,* p. 376.

Such theory may come to rest less on speculation and more on evidence if the non-verbal behavior in infrahuman animals is compared with analogous behavior of human animals. The two great difficulties in this are: (1) finding criteria to distinguish what is learned and what is instinctive among animals; (2) finding ways of stating the analogous and therefore non-verbal part of human behavior. Despite these difficulties, Ford and Beach have succeeded in illuminating the evolution of sex habits, starting with mating in the meadow mouse and ending with mating in 191 human societies.[27] *Patterns of Sexual Behavior* takes as its point of departure a method of subtracting language from the description of human culture; then, "If an anthropologist were studying a native tribe whose language he could not understand and whose sexual mores were particularly free, he would be in a position similar to that of the comparative psychologist who investigates subhuman animals."[28] The enthusiastic reception which has been accorded *Patterns of Sexual Behavior* will perhaps encourage other parallel teams of specialists to give us studies with similar evolutionary implications in some such fields as *Configurations of Food Gathering and Hunting*, or even *Gestalten of Shelters, Nests, and Dams.*

## THE SOVIET LINGUISTIC CONTROVERSY

The Soviet linguistic controversy is in some ways analogous to the culture and personality discussion in American anthropology. The Soviet controversy is certainly closer to this American discussion—in its crusading spirit, in its practical applicability, and in its wide popularity—than it is to the rather esoteric and wholly academic questions which have been asked or answered on the relationship of language and culture, though in substance, the Soviet controversy belongs here.

In America—ever since Freud's writings began to exert their influence in the social sciences—the individual has been discussed as being in some sort of antithetical conflict with culture. Sapir's phrase for this was "the impact of culture on personality." Kroeber's latest understanding of this is stated as follows:

> Freud attempted to annex the whole of culture at one blow, contending that it was all derived from the Oedipus complex. Some later psychoanalytic theorists . . . have proposed . . . "basic personality structure" as the foundation of culture. . . . [This is illogical:] it is culture that has so far proved to be the active and molding force, and personality the molded element.[29]

27 Ford and Beach, *Patterns of Sexual Behavior.* 28 *Idem*, p. 90.
29 A. L. Kroeber, *Anthropology* (Scientific American, vol. 183, no. 3), p. 87.

In Russia—ever since Soviet power was strong enough to dominate intellectual interests—one or another of two successive doctrines have been designated as the correct one to explain the relationship of language to changes brought about by the 1917 Revolution. The first doctrine, promulgated in the name of Marr, extended up to the spring of 1950. According to the Marr doctrine, non-Russian scholarship regards language as having patterns, processes, and historical continuities of its own; this is illogical: it is evolution (as reflected in the Revolution) which is always the active and molding force, and hence language is molded in correlation with everything else which evolves. The second doctrine received Stalin's blessing in the early summer of 1950.[30]

In theory, the Stalin-sponsored doctrine contradicts the Marr doctrine at many points. In more worldly matters, the change in doctrine is said to have resulted in changes in educational personnel, in changes in curricula, in reëxamination of graduate school dissertations, in retraining of teachers in linguistics, and in rewriting of textbooks. It is also interesting to note that in their mid-century assault on the Marr doctrine, professionally relevant critics submitted more than two hundred articles to the editors of *Pravda* who also received an unstated number of letters testifying that the linguistic controversy had aroused wide reader interest. Though twenty-four Russian linguists, including Stalin, are represented in *The Soviet Linguistic Controversy*, it is difficult to find much positive indication of what the new doctrine is supposed to present. Relatively positive points are made in the three papers by Stalin, and in the congratulatory echoes from the fraternity which these three papers stimulated.

The Soviet analogue to our use of culture is bifurcated or trifurcated: (1) an economic base from which tools of production are sometimes separated and spoken of separately; (2) the superstructure which amounts to what is economically determined, namely, the rest of culture; (3) language. In the Marr doctrine, language was determined by the economic base or even equated with part of this, that part which is called the tools of production. In the new doctrine, the economic base and superstructure are related as before, but language is given independent status.

Are there class languages? Chikobava gives an unqualified no: Marr was wholly in error, for both in pre-class societies and in class societies "the existence of a non-class language cannot be disputed."[31] Kudryavtsev gives a qualified no: Marr was wrong for pre-class societies, but there are instances of class languages

30 A. G. Spirkin and others, *The Soviet Linguistic Controversy*, translated from the Soviet press by John V. Murra, Robert M. Hankin, and Fred Holling, with a Foreword by Ernest J. Simmons (New York, 1951).

31 *Idem*, p. 12.

in class societies. And Stalin denies class languages completely: ". . . language can serve equally . . . both exploiters and the exploited"; let a language become class-specialized and it will "doom itself to extinction."[32]

Do languages change when cultures change? Marr said yes; the new doctrine says no: the economic base and all culture associated with economics may change but the language remains as before. "It is no secret that the Russian language served Russian capitalism and Russian bourgeois culture before the October revolution just as well as it now serves the Socialist system in the socialist culture of Russian society."[33]

Is language subject to evolution? Chikobava cites Marr's elaborate, not to say fantastic, chart of linguistic stages;[34] he argues the matter over a long page and a half, and concludes that stage classifications should base themselves on historical linguistics rather than attempting to supplant historical linguistics.[35] Stalin says in effect that just as there is evolution of culture there is evolution of language—the latter "improves its grammar."[36]

At best, only a few positive points are made in the new doctrine, and not all of these are new. Why, then, all the fuss and bother about rejecting Marr, firing or retraining teachers who had been inspired by Marrism, and so? Could it be that an incidental enthusiasm associated with the old doctrine—an enthusiasm having nothing to do with the unsoundness of Marr's theory (and one scarcely mentioned in the controversy)—is the focus of the attack? I refer to the well known enthusiasm in Marrist Russia for preserving and encouraging the serious use of non-Russian languages in the Soviet Republics as well as in the wider sphere of Soviet influence. I ask whether the new doctrine is a rationalization for a new policy which will attempt to make Russian the great and favored language, serving all cultures in their various stages of evolution, as a matter of policy. Or could it be that Russian linguists have found an effective way to extricate themselves from the unsound theories of Marr? This possibility would explain the paucity of positive points; in research being freshly undertaken, results are not announced but directions are indicated. If serious, the new linguistics in Russia promises to be very serious: it squarely faces the difficulty of relating language to culture, and it is oriented toward working on meaning as well as on linguistic structure.

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32 *Idem*, p. 70.
33 *Ibid.*
34 *Idem*, p. 15.
35 *Idem*, p. 17.
36 *Idem*, p. 71.

# LEVELS OF SOCIOCULTURAL INTEGRATION: AN OPERATIONAL CONCEPT

JULIAN H. STEWARD

## I

MANY ANTHROPOLOGISTS who began their careers in research on tribal societies now find themselves involved in the analysis of such complicated contemporary sociocultural systems as China, Russia, India, or the United States. It is not surprising that they bring to these newer tasks methodological tools that were devised primarily for the study of tribal society. Valuable as these tools are for many purposes, they are not adequate to deal with all the phenomena encountered either in the study of modern nations or in the analysis of the acculturation of native populations under the influence of these nations. There is some tendency to meet the difficulty by borrowing concepts and methods from the other social sciences which have had long experience in dealing with contemporary societies. Where this leads to new interdisciplinary approaches it represents healthy scientific development, but often it appears that anthropologists are ready to abandon the unique methods of their own science to imitate the other social sciences. It should be possible to revise basic anthropological concepts and methods to meet the needs of the new and enlarged subject matter.

The greatest need is an adequate conceptualization of the phenomena of sociocultural systems above the tribal level. Because anthropology is distinctive in its primary concern with culture—a concept which perhaps represents its greatest contribution to the social sciences—it seems to be widely held that a general definition of culture is sufficient to dictate problem and method in the study of *any* culture. There would probably be no great disagreement with the bare statement that culture consists of learned modes of behavior that are socially transmitted from one generation to the next and from one society or individual to another. To have operational utility, however, this definition would have to be modified in the case of each particular kind of culture. Our present working definition of culture was devised largely for the study of tribal societies, and it does not at all meet certain needs in the analysis of the more complicated contemporary cultures.

The concept of tribal culture is based on three fundamental aspects of the behavior of members of tribal societies. First, it is a construct that represents the ideal, norm, average, or expectable behavior of all members of a fairly small,

simple, independent, self-contained, and homogeneous society. It is a norm derived from the somewhat varied or deviant modes of individual behavior. It represents essential uniformities, which are shared by all persons, despite some special modes of behavior associated with sex, age, occupation, and other roles; for there are definite and fairly narrow limits to deviant behavior in most tribal cultural activities. Tribal society is not divisible into genuine subcultural groups which have a quasi-independent existence and distinctive way of life. The concept of tribal culture emphasizes shared behavior.

Second, tribal culture is usually said to have a pattern or configuration. Pattern has a considerable variety of meanings, but it seems generally intended to express some underlying consistency and unity, some overall integration. Pattern should perhaps connote structuring; but it is difficult to express structure concretely except in terms of some special component of culture, such as social organization. Benedict met this difficulty by conceiving pattern as synonymous with basic attitudes, life view, or value system shared by all tribal members and thereby giving uniformity to behavior. It is a natural step from this definition of pattern to the concept of cultural personality; for attitudes are an expression of a personality type which has been produced by cultural uniformities. Emphasis is again upon shared characteristics, although the auxiliary concept of status and role personality is introduced to explain certain special deviants.

Third, the concept of tribal culture is essentially relativistic. The culture of any particular tradition—the norm and the pattern manifest in the tradition—is seen in contrast to cultures of other traditions. It is viewed as unique. The tendency to emphasize the persistence of patterns—and usually also of content—within a tradition plays down the qualitative differences between developmental levels or stages.

Conceptualization of tribal culture in terms of its normative, patterned, and relativistic aspects has been a useful tool for analysis and comparison, especially when contrasts are sought. But as a tool for dealing with culture change it has found little utility, even on the primitive level. Archaeology has continued to deal primarily with element lists, and even ethnology has relied extensively upon element distributions in attempting to reconstruct cultural history. It is significant that the more functional and genuinely holistic ethnological approaches have either stressed the normative and persistent quality of primitive cultures—and in many cases been forthrightly antihistorical or unhistorical—or, if dealing with a culture that has been greatly altered under the influence of modern nations, have paid primary attention to the disruption, imbalance, and internal conflicts of the cul-

ture. In cases where the native culture has been substantially changed but has not broken down, the concept of pattern is usually abandoned and acculturation is treated in terms of categories of elements, that is, subpatterns, such as religion, economics, social organization, and the like.

In the analysis of cultural change and acculturation of more complicated sociocultural systems, there are phenomena which cannot be handled by the normative and relativistic concept of culture. The culture of a modern nation is not simply a behavioral norm, which may be ascertained by the observation of all or of a significant sample of individuals. Different groups of individuals are substantially dissimilar in many respects. Moreover, certain aspects of a modern culture can best be studied quite apart from individual behavior. The structure and function of a system of money, banking, and credit, for example, represents supra-individual aspects of culture. To say that in the final analysis a banking system, like all culture, exists in the minds of men is not to say that its operation can best be ascertained by using the ethnographic method to study the behavior of bankers. The system not only has complicated rules, regulations, and principles of its own, but it cannot be understood without reference to world trade, industrial development, marketing, legal systems, and many other factors. The national aspects of banking can be ascertained from economists who have made them their specialty. It would certainly be approaching the problem in the most difficult way to use the ethnographic method.

Not only is the normative concept of culture inapplicable to certain aspects of modern culture, but the tribal meaning of pattern is a clumsy tool for dealing with contemporary society. A contemporary society is not integrated through uniformities of individual behavior. It is an extremely heterogeneous entity, whose total "pattern" consists of intricately interrelated parts of different kinds. When tribal acculturation under the influence of a modern nation is being examined, therefore, it is impossible to think of the replacement of the tribal pattern by the national pattern. No individuals or groups of individuals carry an entire national pattern. They participate only in very special portions of the entire culture. The "assimilation" of any ethnic minority, therefore, can only mean that certain aspects of the national culture affect the minority culture so as to integrate the latter as a specialized dependent part of the whole. The loss of native features does not mean that a national pattern has finally been adopted. Just what has been adopted will depend upon the individual case.

We need, therefore, to examine some of the different characteristics or aspects of modern cultures that must be taken into account in analytic and historical

studies. In order to adapt methodology to the different kinds of cultures, we need a comparative cultural morphology, just as a biologist needs to distinguish the kinds of life forms he deals with.

In an effort to delineate some of the significant components of contemporary sociocultural systems and thereby to indicate the features which are susceptible to analysis by the ethnographic method, I have previously suggested that these systems can be viewed in terms of levels of sociocultural integration.[1] According to this concept a total national culture is divisible into two general kinds of features: first, those that function and must be studied on a national level; second, those that pertain to sociocultural segments or subgroups of the population. The former include the supra-personal and more or less structured—and often formally institutionalized—features, such as governmental forms and legal systems, economic institutions, religious organizations, educational systems, law enforcement and military organizations, and others. These have aspects which are national, sometimes international, in scope and which must be understood apart from the behavior of the individuals connected with them.

The sociocultural segments are subcultural groups of individuals whose behavior lends itself to the methods of direct observation used by anthropology. There are several kinds of subcultural groups in modern states and nations. First there are vertical or localized groups, which may represent differentiation that has occurred during national development—for example, subcultures arising from local specialization in production—or else ethnic minorities, which survive from a pre-national period or which as immigrants brought a distinctive culture into the nation. Second, there are horizontal groups, such as castes, classes, occupational divisions, and other segments, which hold a status position in an hierarchical arrangement and usually crosscut localities to some extent. These, too, may represent segments which either have been differentiated during national development or have been incorporated from the outside.

The distinction between national institutions and sociocultural segments suggests that the ethnographic method is applicable only to the latter. Much recent anthropology, however, has dealt with "nations," "national culture," and "national characteristics." "National" cannot have the same meaning as "tribal," for many aspects of modern cultures do not represent shared behavior which lends itself to the direct observation of individuals. "National culture" has in fact several special meanings apart from the totality of culture, and it is necessary to distinguish these.

1 Julian H. Steward, *Area Research: Theory and Practice* (Bulletin, Social Science Research Council, no. 63, New York, 1950).

First, "national culture" may signify "cultural products" or national achievements in the fields of science, literature, philosophy, religion, and the like, which presuppose a national level of sociocultural integration. In some societies, these may be limited largely to the upper classes. Second, "national culture" may be understood to mean governmental, economic, religious, and other institutions which function on a national scale. Although all members of the society will be affected by these institutions, the effect may be quite different among the various sociocultural segments.

Third, "national culture" may mean the common denominator of behavior that is shared by all members of the nation and that can be ascertained by direct observation of the individual. The method of study presumably requires a technique for sampling large populations, although some use has been made of indirect evidence, such as "cultural content analysis" of novels, motion pictures, and the like. It is not my purpose at present to review the methods for ascertaining the common denominator of national characteristics.[2] I would stress, however, that current research seems to be more concerned with the problem of how to ascertain these characteristics than with the question of what they signify. Once the characteristics have been determined, they are evidently considered, especially by the more psychoanalytically-minded social scientists, as evidence of a basic personality which constitutes the mainspring of all national behavior. If, however, one were to regard the national common denominator as a composite of behavior traits of different orders it would be easier to recognize that some traits do change fairly readily, that national character is not perhaps the tightly integrated entity it is sometimes represented to be.

An analysis of national characteristics from the point of view of levels of sociocultural integration suggests that the common denominator may consist of the following components. First, there are behavior traits which result from practices of child rearing, that is, which are acquired by the individual as a member of the family. In a large, heterogeneous society it seems unlikely that families of all sociocultural subgroups will be essentially similar; but the question is a purely empirical one. Second, there is common behavior to the extent that all members of a society are subject to the same national institutions. All individuals obey the same laws, and they may share in some measure national religious, military, social and other institutions. Third, there may be a common denominator that derives from the influence of mass means of communication. These three kinds of traits

2 Otto Klineberg has presented an excellent review of the subject in *Tensions Affecting International Understanding* (Bulletin, Social Science Research Council, no. 62, New York, 1950).

are not wholly comparable and they may change somewhat independently of one another. International relations, we know, have changed recently at a dizzy rate, and national attitudes toward other nations have changed correspondingly. This does not mean that attitudes toward internal political ideologies have undergone similar transformation. Nevertheless, the latter may change significantly under the pressure of economic factors and the influence of mass communications, while commensurate alteration of family types and ideals does not occur. This view is not in conflict with a functional interpretation. It merely stresses the importance of recognizing the heterogeneity of a modern society and of regarding even the common denominator of shared behavior as a composite, as wheels within wheels, some turning faster than others and each geared to some different aspect of national culture.

The distinctions between the different aspects of national culture clearly imply that a great many different methods must be used to study any national culture in its totality. The problem of how to study a national culture does not ordinarily arise in most of the other social sciences. Except anthropology and sociology, the other disciplines usually deal with a special category of data representing an aspect of culture which functions on a national level. This cannot mean, however, that these categories represent the only significant components of a national culture as is the case of tribal culture. Each category has manifestations on the national level and on the level of the subcultural groups. Religion, for example, may have a state or even international organization and a formal doctrine, but it also has a great variety of local meanings and manifestations. The utility of distinguishing levels of sociocultural integration as well as categories of phenomena can be strikingly illustrated in studies of culture change and acculturation.

In the growth continuum of any culture, there is a succession of organizational types which are not only increasingly complex but which represent new emergent forms.[3] The concept is fairly similar to that of organizational levels in biology. In culture, simple forms, such as those represented by the family or band, do not wholly disappear when a more complex stage of development is reached, nor do they merely survive fossil-like, as the concepts of folkways and mores formerly assumed. They gradually become specialized, dependent parts of new kinds of total configurations. The many-faceted national culture previously delineated represents a very high developmental level.

The application of the concept of developmental levels, or emergent evolution, to cultural phenomena is not new. The idea that "advanced" cultures are differ-

3 Steward, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-114.

ently integrated than "simple" cultures is implicit in most studies. But its methodological utility has been pretty much ignored, partly, I suspect, because it suggests the now widely discredited schemes of cultural evolution. The concept of levels of integration does not presuppose any evolutionary sequence. In biology, the concept that higher levels of life have different organizing principles than lower ones is in no way concerned with the evolution of particular life forms, such as birds, mammals, or reptiles. Similarly, the same concept applied to culture is not concerned with the developmental sequences of particular cultural types. The cultural evolution of Morgan, Tylor, and others is a developmental taxonomy based on concrete characteristics of cultures. The concept of levels of sociocultural integration, on the other hand, is simply a methodological tool for dealing with cultures of different degrees of complexity. It is not a conclusion about evolution.

Another obstacle to the use of the concept of levels of sociocultural integration is the very strong hold of the concept of relativity. So long as the differences between cultural traditions are regarded as the only important qualitative differences, that is, so long as each culture area is seen primarily in terms of a fixed pattern which endures throughout its history, developmental stages will be thought of in terms only of quantitative differences, as matters of mere complexity. The concept of levels of sociocultural integration provides a new frame of reference and a new meaning to pattern; and it facilitates cross-cultural comparison.

## II

Few efforts have been made to specify significant levels of sociocultural integration. The historical approach has been divided between a relativistic emphasis upon the continuity of the traditional pattern and postulation of particular evolutionary stages. Where the approach has been less committed to one of these extreme positions, it has usually dealt only with special aspects of culture, suggesting developmental stages in such features as religion or political organization.

An outstanding contribution which bears directly upon the problem of integrational levels, even though it approaches it somewhat tangentially, is Redfield's concept of the folk society and the folk culture.[4] The characteristics which Redfield ascribes to such a society and culture and which are attributable to a large number of tribal societies and cultures, are descriptive of an organizational type rather than of a particular cultural type. That is, they are intended to

4 Robert Redfield, *The Folk Society* (American Journal of Sociology, vol. 52, pp. 293-308, 1947).

characterize societies at a certain level of sociocultural integration in wholly different cultural traditions. Further comparative analysis will no doubt require redefinition of the concept, but for the present purposes we can assume that most of the diagnostic features are significant. Folk societies are small, isolated, close-knit, homogeneous, patterned around kinship relations, oriented toward implicit goals and values, and pervaded by general supernaturalism.

Redfield did not attempt to conceptualize supra-folk levels of sociocultural integration, but in his studies of Yucatan[5] he uses the urban society as a contrasting type. Subjected to urbanization, the folk society is secularized, individualized, and disorganized. Urbanization, however, is but one of the processes through which a folk society may be integrated into a larger sociocultural system; for cities are but specialized parts of such systems. Some folk societies are incorporated into states and nations as regionally specialized subcultures which do not undergo urbanization at all and which are readapted rather than transformed. Even when the folk society is transformed, the individual is not only secularized, individualized, and disorganized but he adopts scientific or naturalistic explanations in place of supernatural ones, he participates in occupational, class, ethnic, or other sociocultural segments of the city, and in general he is reintegrated in a new kind of system.

Redfield's concept of the folk society and the folk culture are based largely on his studies of the Maya Indians of Yucatan. Historically, the Maya villages were once parts of city states and federations, sometimes called "empires," and they became relatively independent after the Spaniards destroyed the state or national superstructure. The evident stability of their society and culture through the upheavals of the Spanish Conquest and later events suggests a a fairly high degree of integration. Whether the nature of this integration is essentially similar to that of tribal societies and to what is broadly called "folk societies" in other cultural traditions is a question to be answered by comparative, cross-cultural analysis. It is significant that the term "tribal society" remains an exceedingly ill-defined catch-all. Once a typology of integrational levels is established empirically, it will be possible to examine the reintegration of simpler societies into larger sociocultural systems and to make generalizations about process which go beyond what Redfield derived from the process of urbanization.

It is certain that further discriminations will require recognition of integrational levels that are lower than the folk level. The biological or nuclear family represents a level that is lower in a structural sense, and in some cases it appears

5 Robert Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatan* (Chicago, 1941).

to have been historically antecedent to higher forms. Among the aboriginal Western Shoshoni, practically all features of the relatively simple culture were integrated and functioned on a family level. The family was the reproductive, economic, educational, political, and religious unit. It reared its children in comparative isolation, obtained its own food, and cared for its members at birth, sickness, death, and other crises. It made its own decisions on virtually all matters. Family dependence upon outsiders was rare and fairly unpatterned. The family sometimes called a shaman to treat the sick, coöperated with other families in communal hunts and dances, and visited relatives and friends when the opportunity permitted. But it could and did exist during most of the year without these extra-familial relations. Extra-familial dependency represented only a slight tendency toward a higher level of organization; patterns of multi-family unity had not become fixed.

The nuclear family, despite its many varieties, is basic in every modern society, and it seems safe to suppose that it has always been basic. In many cases, it was probably antecedent to the extended family, band, community, and other multi-family forms. In any event, there are probably several levels of sociocultural integration between the family and the folk society which should be distinguished. And above the folk society there are many significantly different levels of integration. For the purpose of the present exposition, however, it is sufficient to discuss only three levels—the nuclear family, the folk society, and the state. These are qualitatively distinctive organizational systems, which represent successive stages in any developmental continuum and constitute special kinds of cultural components within higher sociocultural systems.

Folk societies or multi-family sociocultural systems develop when activities requiring a supra-family organization appear. Productive processes may become patterned around collective hunting, fishing, herding, or farming. Property rights requiring interfamilial understandings are established. Unity achieved in economic behavior may be reinforced through group ceremonialism, through patterned forms of extended kinship and friendship, and through recreational activities. Society acquires a structure appropriate to the particular kinds of interfamilial relations that develop in the cultural tradition, and patterns of social control and leadership emerge.

One of the most common forms of multi-family integration is an extended kin group of some kind. Not all peoples, however, have a supra-family organization based on extended kinship. The nuclear family may be integrated directly into a larger, multi-kin structure.

What may be called roughly a state level of integration is marked by the appearance of new patterns that bring several multi-family aggregates, or folk societies, into functional dependence upon one another within a still larger system. Communities or other sociocultural segments of a folk type may participate in state projects, such as the construction of irrigation works, roads, religious edifices, and so on; they may produce special foods or manufactured objects for exchange with other communities and for state purposes; they may join other communities in offensive and defensive warfare; they may accept state rules, regulations, and standards concerning property, credit, commerce, and other matters of mutual concern. They frequently accept a state religion. The systems of controls arising from economic, military, and religious needs creates a political hierarchy and a social system of classes and statuses. Qualitatively new institutions appear on the state, or national, level: governmental structure and control of those aspects of life which are of state concern; social stratification; and national cultural achievements. All of these have national aspects that are distinguishable from their varied folk manifestations.

There are many kinds of state sociocultural systems, each having characteristics determined by factors which are peculiar to the area and to the cultural tradition. But all states can be said to represent a broad level of sociocultural organization which is more than the sum-total of the families and communities of which it consists.

There is nothing new in the idea that each stage of sociocultural development entails new forms of coöperation and interaction, and that societies may be arranged in general developmental series, such as family, village, and state, gemeinschaft and gesellschaft, and others. The point we wish to stress is that the concept of levels may be used as an analytic tool in the study of changes within any particular sociocultural system, for each system consists of parts which developed at different stages and through different processes and which, though functionally specialized in their dependency upon the whole, continue to integrate certain portions of the culture. The problem of acculturation may be rephrased so that the phenomena can be handled not merely in terms of categories of elements and total patterns but also of functional levels. This is necessary in any acculturational situation involving a modern state or nation, for the different categories of cultural features—religion, economics, government, and the like—cut across the nation, community, class, and family levels, and function differently at each. National religions, for example, involve a formal organization and dogma, but their community or class manifestations may be

quite varied, while a considerable amount of supernaturalism is particular to the individual or family.

## III

Three brief examples will suffice to illustrate the utility of the concept of sociocultural levels in acculturational studies. These are offered to show how the concept could be used as a research tool and not to present definitive, substantive results, for the detailed research has not yet been done. Western Shoshoni acculturation exemplifies the influence of a modern nation upon a family level of sociocultural integration. Changes in the Inca Empire under the Spanish Conquest illustrate how the culture of a native state may be more radically affected at the national level than at lower levels. Post-conquest changes in the Circum-Caribbean culture show loss of state functions and deculturation to a folk level.

### 1

The distinctive features of Western Shoshoni acculturation are best understood if contrasted to the acculturation of other Indians who had a tribal culture.

American Indians are potentially subject to influences from both the national and folk levels of United States culture. National influences consist of trade relations, such as the selling of furs, farm produce, and craft objects, and the purchase of manufactured goods. They include governmental services, such as schools, hospitals, work projects, grants of money and goods, and farm extension aid. They also include laws, establishment of reservations, and other restrictive measures. In some cases there was armed intervention in tribal affairs. National influences likewise have been introduced through special groups, such as churches. All of these influences are mediated through agents of one kind or another. But the contacts with the agents of the national institutions are rarely so continuous and powerful that the personal behavior patterns of the individual agents are adopted to any appreciable degree by the Indians.

In many cases, however, the Indians come into daily contact with White settlers—miners, farmers, and ranchers—which presents the opportunity for acculturation of each group toward the folk culture of the other. In early times, the White trappers were often strongly acculturated toward the Indian way of life. Later, the White farmers introduced rural American patterns which began to influence the Indians.

The reaction of the Indians to these national and folk patterns depended upon their own native level of cultural development. Most Indians had some kind of tribal organization, some fairly cohesive in-group, which made it difficult for an

individual to detach himself from the tribe and enter the context of the neighboring rural White culture. The reservation is a result as well as a cause of tribal cohesion. It is only the extremely acculturated individuals who have been able to break from tribal life and, race prejudice permitting, behave like rural Whites.

But native patterns do not necessarily remain intact because individual Indians do not participate in White society. All tribes have been brought into a relationship of dependency upon American national culture through economic, governmental, and often religious institutions. In most cases, this influence of the institutions of the larger sociocultural system has been sufficient to destroy the native tribal pattern, often to destroy it with traumatic effects. It has been the most serious weakness of the New Deal policy for the Indians to suppose that an uncontaminated native core of attitudes and values could be preserved while the tribe became increasingly dependent upon national institutions. One of the most tragic cases of present cultural conflict is the Navaho. Their very dependence upon livestock as cash produce for a national market puts them into competition with each other and threatens to destroy the native culture. The situation is aggravated by the limited grazing resources.

The Western Shoshoni were spared the more crucial difficulties experienced by Indians who had a fairly tightly-woven fabric of community culture. When White miners and ranchers entered their country a century ago, individual families readily attached themselves to white communities. Their hunting and gathering resources partly destroyed, they worked for wages sufficiently to maintain their very low standard of living. Later, they were given reservations, but these consisted of little more than small residence sites. A few who obtained arable land undertook farming in a small way, very like their White neighbors. Most Western Shoshoni, however, were only loosely tied to any locality or group, for there were no community bonds beyond kinship and friendship. Persons commonly wandered from place to place, covering distances of several hundred miles if they could manage transportation.

On the whole, Western Shoshoni acculturation has come about more through association with Whites than through governmental services. The influence of schools, health services, work projects, and other Federal benefits has been sporadic. Facilities have been poor, and the Indians have been too mobile. Association with rural Whites has not been very sustained, but it has been sufficient to acculturate the Shoshoni toward the rural American culture, especially where economic needs have forced them into the role of nomadic wage laborers. But it has not wiped out all Indian practices. Acculturation has consisted primarily of modifi-

cation of those patterns necessary to adjust to the rural White culture. It has brought wage labor, White styles of dress, housing, transportation, food, and other material items, use of English and some literacy, and considerable adaptability in dealing with Whites, though race prejudice has prevented full participation in White social relations. The Shoshoni retain, however, many practices and beliefs pertaining to kinship relations, child rearing, shamanism, supernatural powers and magic, and recreation, especially gambling games.

Many other American Indian tribes retain features of this kind after other portions of their native culture have been lost. These features, however, are those that functioned on a family level and may survive apart from tribal patterns. The difference between the Western Shoshoni and most other tribes is that the former did not have to experience the break-up of tribal institutions. The individual families were quite free to adjust to changed circumstances in the most expedient way without facing conflict. Perhaps this is why they are generally quite amiable toward the Whites, exhibiting no deep-seated hostility.

2

At the time of the Spanish Conquest, the Inca of the South American Andes had a fairly elaborate empire. The Conquest produced radical changes in the national institutions, but the lower levels of the native sociocultural system were affected far less.

The native Inca empire was controlled through highly centralized political, military, economic, and religious institutions. These had developed in the course of empire growth, national or imperial institutions being imposed upon the local states just as local state institutions had evidently been imposed upon the earlier communities. The Inca institutions affected the states and communities to the extent that it was necessary to make the empire function, but this did not mean that everything at the lower levels had to be changed. Much was left alone. The imperial political structure consisted of a hierarchy of positions, the more important being held by members of the royal family while the lesser were left to native rulers. Community affairs that did not conflict with the state were evidently handled much as in pre-Inca times. Economic production was reorganized in order to channel a portion of goods and services to the ruling bureaucracy and to the Inca Sun Temple, but production for community and household purposes seems to have been little affected. The kinds and quantities of goods consumed in the home and village were not greatly changed, except perhaps through the introduction of methods of quantity production. The Inca Sun God was forced upon

all communities as the supreme deity, but local gods, cults, and rites and household fetishes, shrines, and beliefs were not disturbed.

Under the Conquest, Spanish national institutions replaced those of the Inca, but the lower levels of native culture were not so drastically altered. Spaniards took over the key positions in the political hierarchy and Spanish law was imposed to the extent necessary to maintain the Spanish institutions. But many native rulers were retained in lower positions and a large portion of village activities went on as in native times. Spanish economic patterns introduced a system of cash produce, money, credit, and commerce, but this was designed at first primarily to drain off wealth, especially gold, for the Spanish Crown and the upper classes. Instead of contributing goods and services to the Inca ruling classes, people were drafted into the mines to produce gold for export and were forced to pay tribute in various forms to their conquerors. Once these obligations were discharged, however, village and family affairs seem to have been carried on in traditional ways.

Spanish religion likewise affected the Inca culture differently at different levels. The Catholic Church, which in feudal Spain had sanctioned and implemented state policies, completely replaced the Inca Sun cult, for it could not tolerate a rival national religion. All Peruvians became nominal Catholics, accepting the Christian god and saints and contributing to Church support, but they did not abandon local shrines, ancestor worship, household gods, shamanism, and other lower level forms of religion. And the Catholic fathers were content to class these community and family practices as mere "paganism," which was innocuous provided it did not threaten the state religion.

Modern, republican Peru is very different from sixteenth century colonial Peru, but a great deal of native community and family culture has survived in the areas least touched by commercialism. Over the centuries, however, national economic patterns have struck deeply at the heart of community culture. The production of cash crops, both by independent small farmers and by plantation wage laborers, has linked the people to the national society. Wage labor in pottery, textile, and other factories, service in the army, work on roads and other government projects, and other cash-oriented occupations, together with loss of lands, is destroying the basis of the native communities and converting the mass of the Indians into a national laboring class. The local sociocultural segments are being replaced by horizontal or class subcultural groups. This trend is occurring in all parts of the world as native populations are drawn into the orbit of an industrial world through specialized production of cash commodities.

3

Among certain of the Circum-Caribbean tribes, the Spanish Conquest destroyed native state institutions without effectively substituting Hispanic national patterns. These tribes were consequently deculturated to a community level of sociocultural organization.

This deculturative process may be illustrated by the Cuna-Cueva Indians of the Isthmus of Panama.[6] Archaeological evidence and historical documents show that at the time of the Conquest this tribe had a rather elaborate state organization. There was a ruling class, consisting of chiefs and nobles, whose status is evidenced by rich burials. These rulers were interred with several wives or retainers and a wealth of luxury goods, including gold objects, carved stone, pearls, precious stones, and ceramics. The priests were among the upper classes, and they presided over a cult which depended in part upon human sacrifice. As prisoners of war became sacrificial victims, warriors could achieve some upward mobility of status through taking captives. The common people were the farmers and the producers of the luxury goods. At the bottom of the scale were some kind of slaves, apparently female captives and perhaps males who were not sacrificed.

The Spanish Conquest struck the Cuna with sufficient force to wipe out the national or state institutions. Military expeditions eliminated the upper classes and confiscated their wealth. Human sacrifice and the state religion based on it were suppressed. But Spanish rule and the Catholic Church were not very effectively substituted for the native institutions, for the people moved into regions where the Spaniards did not care to follow. Left comparatively unmolested and yet unable to maintain state functions, the Cuna resumed life on a community basis. The content and organization of the Cuna community is strikingly like that of the Tropical Forest tribes, and it must be assumed that this type of culture was always part of the more elaborate Circum-Caribbean state type of culture. Today, the Cuna farm for home consumption and make their own fairly simple household goods and utensils. The luxury objects were no longer made after the upper classes for which they were intended were wiped out. The manufactures now include pole-and-thatched houses, dugout canoes, basketry, simple pottery, and bark cloth. The village is the largest political unit, and it is controlled by a headman assisted by one or more shamans. These shamans do not

6 See Samuel K. Lothrop, "The Archeology of Panama" (in *Handbook of South American Indians,* Julian H. Steward, ed., Bulletin, Bureau of American Ethnology, no. 143: vol. 4, *The Circum-Caribbean Tribes,* pp. 143-167, 1948), and David Stout, "The Cuna" (*idem,* pp. 257-268).

have the priestly functions of the native Cuna, for loss of state religion has left little more than a simple village religion which centers around girls' puberty ceremonies and death rites.

## IV

In the three cases we have briefly described, much of the significance of the acculturation would have been lost if we had attempted to view changes in the native society solely in terms of some total cultural pattern or configuration. Whether the substantive conclusions suggested are correct or not, it is clear that cultural and social interaction takes place on different levels. We selected the national, community, and family levels for illustration, but there are no doubt other levels which will have greater significance for certain problems.

The concept of levels of sociocultural integration is a conclusion about culture change only in the sense that there do appear to be phenomena which cannot be explained by any other frame of reference. Any aspect of culture—economic, social, political, or religious—has different meanings when viewed in terms of its national functions and of its special manifestations in different subcultures. Stated differently, the individual's participation in culture is of a somewhat different order at the family, community, and national levels. As a member of the family, he is concerned with the most basic human needs—procreation, subsistence, child rearing, sickness, and death. Even where community or state institutions intervene to assist the family, these functions still remain the primary reason for the existence of the family. Because they are directly concerned with biological survival, they are charged with emotions—emotions involving sex, hunger, fear of sickness and death, and social anxieties. In the development of the individual, they are among the earliest learned and the most deeply ingrained. This presumably is why behavior which functions on a family level is the most difficult to change in a changing culture.

The individual, of course, reacts as a total person to his function as a member of the family, community, and nation. Nevertheless, community functions may develop without completely altering the family. New patterns of coöperation and social interaction lift certain responsibilities from the family and make it a specialized dependency of a larger sociocultural unit. But they by no means supercede all of its functions.

State functions, too, may be mediated to the individual through the community or they may reach him directly. But he does not surrender his role in the family and community by virtue of becoming a member of a nation. His relation-

ship to the nation is specialized according to the subculture of his local group or class.

The inference of these observations for studies of national characteristics and national character is clear. Personal behavior is not something that can be understood simply by studying random samples of the total national population. The several aspects, or levels, of national culture we have previously defined—national institutions, national cultural achievements, subcultural patterns, family patterns, behavior in situations involving different subcultural groups, and the common denominator—should be distinguished and the role of each appraised. The significance of each of these aspects will depend upon the particular culture, and for this reason proper conceptualization of the culture studied is essential.

These comments on the usefulness of the concept of levels of sociocultural organization to studies of national characteristics and national character are offered because such studies have wide current interest. The concept, however, will have value to another problem or objective of anthropology which will surely become of major importance in the future. The search for cross-culturally valid laws or regularities has suffered as much for want of adequate methodological tools as for lack of interest. So long as developmental stages within any cultural tradition are regarded primarily as quantitative differences and the traditions are assumed to be qualitatively unique, formulation of cross-culturally significant regularities is foredoomed. If, however, stages are recognized as qualitatively distinctive, the way is clear to establish developmental typologies that are valid for more than one tradition. Even if this typology were based solely on general forms of the kind we have discussed, it would facilitate the analysis of the processes of change from one form to another. Distinction of levels of internal organization within sociocultural systems would also facilitate the discovery of regularities. Instead of dealing with total configurations, which are made virtually unique by definition, it would be possible to isolate special components, which, having been analyzed in their relation to the whole, could safely be compared with similar components in other cultural traditions.

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# THE BIDAI INDIANS OF SOUTHEASTERN TEXAS[1]

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OUR FRAGMENTARY KNOWLEDGE of the Bidai,[2] a small southeastern Texas tribe,[3] has led to the conclusion that they are to be classed among the culturally-impoverished groups of the Texas Gulf Coast. Ethnographic materials obtained through intensive research in early documents make it evident, however, that the Bidai belong culturally in the Southeastern area, though they are definitely marginal.

## GEOGRAPHIC SETTING

During most of their recorded history the principal habitat of the Bidai Indians was a small area about Bedias Creek, a western branch of the Trinity River, in present-day Madison, Walker, and Grimes Counties, Texas. However, as a semi-migratory group, they moved within a broader area between the Colorado and Sabine rivers and between the Gulf Coast and the Camino Real, an historic road just north of Bedias Creek, connecting San Antonio with Natchitoches in Louisiana. For purposes of trade, they occasionally traveled outside this broader area.

The Bidai were surrounded by a number of Indian groups (see Fig. 1). The Hasinai, to the north, were a confederation of Caddoan tribes. The Bidai were said to be interrelated with these Indians,[4] and visited them regularly over a path they had made, called the "Bidai Trail."[5] The Akokisa, an Atakapan tribe on the lower Trinity River, were allied with the Bidai, and the two groups frequently intermarried. The Patiri Indians, just south of the Bidai, were another tribe of

1 The writer wishes to express her appreciation to Professor T. N. Campbell for his many helpful suggestions and criticisms in the preparation of this paper. Sincere thanks are also due Professor Herbert E. Bolton, who kindly permitted the writer to examine his notes on the Bidai.

2 Only two very brief summaries of the Bidai have been published. See Frederick Webb Hodge (ed.), *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico* (Bulletin, Bureau of American Ethnology, no. 30, pt. 1, 1907), pp. 145-146; John R. Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States* (Bulletin, Bureau of American Ethnology, no. 137, 1946), p. 96; map 1, facing p. 1.

3 The Bidai were never estimated at more than 500 individuals.

4 The Baron de Ripperdá to the Viceroy, July 6, 1772, *Archivo General y Público de México, Provincias Internas*, vol. 20, folios 24-25.

5 Diligencias practicadas por Dn. Joaquín de Orobio Capn. de la Bahía sobre establecimto de Franceses, October 1, 1745, *Béxar Archives*, fs. 6-10; Thomas Y. Banks, *The Bedias Trail in Angelina County* (Frontier Times, vol. 13, pp. 529-531, Bandera, Texas, 1936).

FIG. 1. The Bidai Indians and neighboring tribes during the eighteenth century.

Atakapan affiliation. The Tonkawa Indians ranged north and west, as did the Deadose, a branch of the Bidai which became separated some time in the early 1700's. The Karankawa Indians, who lived along the Gulf Coast to the southwest, were allies of the Bidai during the late eighteenth century.[6] Occasionally the Bidai were closely associated with Kickapoo and Koasati Indians who had moved into Texas during the early nineteenth century.[7]

## TRIBAL SYNONYMY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

The name of the Bidai Indians is derived from a Caddo word, *bidai,* signifying "brushwood."[8] This possibly refers to the Trinity River, which contains much brushwood in its bottomlands, or to the Big Thicket, an area of unusually dense vegetation east of the Trinity, where the Bidai also lived.[9] According to Ker, in their own language they were the "Quasmigdo" tribe.[10] Occasionally the Bidai are called "Spring Creek" or "Shrub" Indians.[11] Most of the names given the Bidai in the literature are, however, variations of the original Caddo word, e.g., Badies, Bedias, Beadeyes, Bedins, Vidays, Vidaizes, Vivais, and Redais.

Until recently, little was known of the linguistic affiliations of the Bidai, for only a few doubtful words in their language have been recorded.[12] Because they

6 Herbert E. Bolton, *The Founding of the Missions on the San Gabriel River, 1745-1749* (Southwestern Historical Quarterly, vol. 17, pp. 323-378, 1914), pp. 333, 374; Herbert E. Bolton (ed.), *Athanase de Mézières and the Louisiana-Texas Frontier, 1768-1780* (2 vols., Cleveland, 1914), vol. 1, p. 261.

7 E. L. Blair, *Early History of Grimes County* ([Austin, Texas], 1930), p. 36; *The Texas Almanac for 1858* (Galveston, 1857), p. 174.

8 Swanton, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

9 *Ibid.*; Rex W. Strickland, *Moscoso's Journey Through Texas* (Southwestern Historical Quarterly, vol. 46, pp. 109-137, 1942), p. 133.

10 Henry Ker, *Travels through the Western Interior of the United States, from the year 1808 up to the year 1816* (Elizabethtown, N. J., 1816), p. 122.

11 Henry Stuart Foote, *Texas and the Texans* (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1841), vol. 1, p. 299; J. O. Dyer, "The Pioneer Texas Farmer" (*The Galveston Daily News,* June 3, 1923, p. 22). Much of Dyer's material on the Bidai is undocumented. When checked against other records, however, it has proved to be reliable. Dyer was a physician who apparently obtained his information on Indians from old settlers, one of whom was his uncle, who had personal contact with the East Texas tribes.

12 One of these is "Quasmigdo," the Bidai's own name for themselves. Rufus Grimes, of Grimes County, Texas, set down from memory in 1887, thirty-three years after the removal of the Indians from that county, the first six numerals in the Bidai language. These are: 1. namah, 2. nahonde, 3, naheestah, 4. nashirimah, 5. nahot nahonde, 6. nashees nahonde. The numerals from 7 to 10 reportedly began with the letter *n*. Gatschet classified these words as Caddo because, like certain Caddo adjectives, they began in *na*. It should be noted, however, that numerals beginning in these letters appear also in Karankawa, another Indian language of Texas. (*Vide* Albert S. Gatschet, *The Karankawa Indians, the Coast People of Texas,* Archaeological and Ethnological Papers of the Peabody Museum, vol. 1, pp. 1-103, 1891), pp. 39, 84-85.

sometimes spoke Caddo—a *lingua franca* throughout much of eastern Texas in the eighteenth century—a number of writers classed them as Caddo.[13] Sibley[14] was an exception: in 1807 he wrote that, although the Bidai spoke Caddo, they had a language of their own which "differed from all others."

A manuscript discovered by Bolton[15] at the beginning of the present century in the archives of the Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Querétaro has clarified the linguistic position of the Bidai. This document indicates that their language was much like that of the Akokisa. Inasmuch as Akokisa belongs to the Atakapa division of the Tunican (?)[16] linguistic stock, which in turn forms part of the Hokan-Siouan family,[17] the Bidai language has been given this classification.

## HISTORY

The accounts of the earliest explorers in southeastern Texas—Cabeza de Vaca, Moscoso, and La Salle—do not mention the Bidai Indians. It was not until 1691 that their name first appeared in written records.[18] By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, epidemics had reduced them greatly in numbers, and the few survivors were absorbed by other tribes. Thus their recorded history covers little more than a century and a half.

During most of this period southeastern Texas was under Spanish control. Nevertheless, until 1746, when the Spanish government began its first extensive explorations in the area, the Bidai were little known, except to French traders who illegally visited them for the purpose of obtaining the skins of bison and deer.[19] After this time, Bidai-Spanish contacts were common. Despite the existing Spanish laws against barter with the Indians, the governor of the province and others began to trade extensively with the Bidai.[20]

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13 For example, see *idem.*, p. 39; Hodge, *op. cit.*, pp. 145, 182-183; Dudley G. Wooten (ed.), *A Comprehensive History of Texas, 1685 to 1897* (2 vols., Dallas, 1898), vol. 1, pp. 27, 722.

14 John Sibley, *Travels in the Interior Parts of America* (London, 1807), p. 43.

15 Bolton, *Missions on the San Gabriel River*, p. 374.

16 Swanton uses a question mark to indicate that the stock is a tentative one. Swanton, *op. cit.*, table 1, facing p. 10; John R. Swanton, *Indian Tribes of the Lower Mississippi Valley and Adjacent Coast of the Gulf of Mexico* (Bulletin, Bureau of American Ethnology, no. 43, 1911), p. 36.

17 David G. Mandelbaum (ed.), *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir* (Berkeley, 1949), pp. 169-178.

18 Fray Francisco Casañas de Jesus María, Informe de Fray Francisco de Jesus María al Virrey Conde de Galvez sobre las Misiones de Tejas, August 15, 1691.

19 Diligencias practicadas, fs. 11-12.

20 Testimonio practicado sobre si Dn. Jasinto de Barrios tuvo comersio con Muniziones de Guerra con los Yndios Barbaros de Esta Prova., January-March, 1760, *Béxar Archives.*

In 1749 a portion of the Bidai were settled with other Atakapan-speaking groups at San Ildefonso, one of the three San Xavier missions established on the San Gabriel River, in present-day Milam County.[21] The Bidai remained here only a few years, and efforts to place them in missions during the following decade proved unsuccessful.

Although the Bidai had always been friendly to the Spaniards, by 1770 they began to engage in intrigue. The Spaniards had for some time been making alliances with the Comanche, Wichita, Hasinai, and other large tribes in preparation for extensive campaigns against the Lipan Apache to the west, who were considered the common enemy of most of the Texas tribes. It was discovered that the Bidai had for several years been supplying the Lipan with firearms and ammunition of French origin. In addition, they were instrumental in effecting an alliance between the Lipan and the Hasinai. Still other reports indicated that the Bidai were communicating with the English, who at that time were making trouble for the Spaniards. As soon as the governor learned of these facts, agents were sent among the Bidai to break their secret agreements.[22]

After this episode, the Bidai diminished in importance. They seem to have broken up into a number of small bands which wandered over much of southeastern Texas. Many of them were wiped out in epidemics during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[23] Early in the nineteenth century some groups merged with Akokisa Indians,[24] who eventually joined the Atakapa in Louisiana or died out in the region of the lower Trinity River. Other Bidai intermarried with the Koasati,[25] whose descendants are found today on the Alabama and Coushatta Reservation in Polk County, Texas. Finally, in the year 1854, the remaining Bidai, probably numbering a little more than a hundred persons, were moved with the Caddo to the Brazos Reserve in north central

21 Bolton, *Missions on the San Gabriel River*, pp. 373-374.

22 Bolton, *Athanase de Mézières*, pp. 65-66, 93-99; Expediente sobre proposiciones, July 4, 6, 1772, *Archivo General y Público de México, Historia*, vol. 51, fs. 23, 40-41.

23 De Mézières to Croix, March 18, 1778, *Archivo General y Público de México, Provincias Internas*, vol. 182, fs. 21, 112; Anna L. Davis, "Old Montgomery" (*Dallas Morning News*, December 3, 1925, p. 15); J. O. Dyer, "The Pioneer Texas Farmer" (*Galveston Daily News*, April 1, 1923, p. 29; September 2, 1923, p. 18).

24 J. O. Dyer, "History and Lessons of Texas and of Galveston" (*Galveston Daily News*, May 12, 1923, p. 5); Noticias de las naciones Yndias de la Prova. de Texas que me dio Samuel Davenport en Nacogdoches desde cuyo punto se han de considerar sus situaciones y distancias, April 24, 1809, *Nacogdoches Archives*, vol. 11.

25 Annie Heloise Abel (ed.), *A Report from Natchitoches in 1807, by Dr. John Sibley* (Indian Notes and Monographs, Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, vol. 25, 1922), p. 96.

Texas.[26] Five years later, the "Caddo and their allies" were permanently removed from the state and given lands on the Wichita Reserve in the Chickasaw Nation, Indian Territory.[27]

Swanton gives us our last shred of information on these Indians. In 1912, he found one individual of probable Bidai descent living in eastern Texas. This person, however, had been brought up in a White family and had learned nothing of the Bidai language or culture.[28]

## ECONOMIC LIFE

The Bidai Indians were an agricultural group during much of their recorded history. Maize was cultivated, sometimes in sufficient amounts to serve as an article of trade.[29] No other information on their agricultural practices has been century.[30]

The Bidai subsisted primarily on the products of the hunt. Meat and skins were obtained principally from the deer. Apparently the Bidai had a surplus of these items, for they were frequently traded to Europeans.[31] Some of the deerskins were so finely prepared that they were said to resemble "chamois."[32] Bison were important until the middle eighteenth century, when these animals began to disappear from southeastern Texas. Although the Bidai owned a number of horses,[33] it is not known whether they were used in bison hunting. Bison meat was sometimes preserved by drying, and the skins were bartered with Europeans.[34] The bear became increasingly important after the middle eighteenth century. Bearskins were employed in making "tents" for winter use; the teeth and claws served as articles of trade. Although bear fat was a common source of oil, the

26 Fannie McAlpine Clarke, *A Chapter in the History of Young Territory* (Texas State Historical Association Quarterly, vol. 9, pp. 51-62, 1905), p. 53; T. C. Richardson, *East Texas: its History and its Makers* (4 vols., New York, 1940), vol. 3, p. 951.

27 *The Texas Almanac for 1869* (Galveston, 1868), p. 157.

28 Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States*, p. 96.

29 Noticias de las naciones Yndias; Ker, *op. cit.*, p. 121; Juan Antonio Padilla, Memoria sobre los Yndios infieles de la Provincia de Texas, December 27, 1819, *The Austin Papers;* Testimonio practicado; Sibley, *op. cit.*, p. 43; William Bollaert, *Observations on the Indian Tribes in Texas* (Journal, Ethnological Society of London, vol. 2, pp. 262-283, 1850), p. 278.

found, except that they seem to have raised gourds during the early nineteenth

30 J. O. Dyer, "The Pioneer Texas Farmer" (*Galveston Daily News*, June 3, 1923, p. 22).

31 Testimonio practicado; Diario qe. hizo el Padre Fr. Gaspar Jose de Solis en la Visita que fué a hacer de las Misiones de la Provincia de Texas, 1767, *Archivo General y Público de México, Historia*, vol. 27, pt. 2, f. 292.

32 August 19, 1744, *Béxar Archives*, f. 2; Diligencias practicadas, f. 13.

33 Bolton, *Athanase de Mézières*, p. 347.

34 *Journal of Stephen F. Austin on his First Trip to Texas, 1821* (Texas State Historical Association Quarterly, vol. 7, pp. 286-307, 1904), p. 304; Diligencias practicadas, f. 13.

Bidai seem to have had a taboo against using the meat.[35] The beaver was sometimes hunted. In addition, other small animals were caught in traps made of intertwined canes.[36]

Fishing was also part of the Bidai economy, at least during the first half of the nineteenth century. They apparently moved toward the Gulf Coast during the summers for this purpose.[37]

The Bidai frequently gathered wild fruits and honey. The *Nelumbo lutea*, or water chinquapin, was obtained from the shallow ponds and marshy areas where it grew. The seeds of this plant and the fleshy rhizomes were commonly eaten. Acorns were an important food. Through what appears to be a leaching process, in which the nuts were buried in pits filled with ashes and damp earth, the Bidai prepared a kind of acorn meal which sometimes served as an item of trade.[38]

## ARTS AND CRAFTS

Beyond the fact that bearskin tents were used during the winter, nothing is known of Bidai habitations. Data on their clothing are lacking, except for references to a few items of European clothing secured from the French. Some information on weapons and tools, however, was recorded. The bow and arrow was the most important. Although projectile points of flint were most commonly employed, copper-tipped points have been noted.[39] Ker reported that the Bidai also had spears which were ten feet long and tipped with deer antler.[40] During the middle eighteenth century, they received a plentiful supply of firearms and ammunition from the French in Louisiana.[41] Flint knives and scrapers served as tools for dressing skins or for carving wooden articles.[42]

35 Diligencias practicadas, fs. 11-13; J. O. Dyer, "The Pioneer Texas Farmer" (*Galveston Daily News*, June 3, 1923, p. 22); J. O. Dyer, *Historical Sketch. Comparisons of Customs of Wild Tribes near Galveston a Century Ago with Ancient Semitic Customs* (Galveston, 1916), p. 6; August 19, 1744, *Béxar Archives*, f. 2.

36 Ker, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

37 George W. Bonnell, *Topographical Description of Texas. To which is added an Account of the Indian Tribes* (Austin, 1840), p. 139; Noticias de las naciones Yndias; Julia Kathryn Garrett, *Letters and Documents. Dr. John Sibley and the Louisiana-Texas Frontier, 1803-1814* (Southwestern Historical Quarterly, vol. 47, pp. 319-324, 1944), p. 324.

38 J. O. Dyer, "The Pioneer Texas Farmer" (*Galveston Daily News*, June 3, 1923, p. 22; August 19, 1923, p. 24); Ker, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

39 A. J. Sowell, *History of Fort Bend County* (Houston, 1904), p. 105; Ker, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

40 Ker, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

41 Ynforme del the. Galván sobre Sn. Xavier y carta escrita al dho el año de 1750, *Archivo del Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Querétaro*, K, legajo 19, no. 90; The Baron de Ripperdá to the Viceroy, August 25, 1772, *Archivo General y Público de México, Provincias Internas*, vol. 20, fs. 46-49.

42 Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 15; J. O. Dyer, "The Pioneer Texas Farmer" (*Galveston Daily News*, June 3, 1923, p. 22); Ker, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

The Bidai made unusual clay vessels. These were fashioned by first weaving strong rushes into bags, which were either circular or square in shape. These were coated inside and out with a thick layer of clay. Then the vessels were either sun-dried or baked in pits filled with hot ashes. These "daub" pots, as they were called by early Anglo-American settlers, probably could not stand water, and so must have been used primarily for storage purposes.[43]

Other containers were also used by the Bidai. Food was sometimes cooked in skin vessels through a stone-boiling process.[44] Occasionally, however, they obtained iron pots through trade and these must have been used in cooking.[45] Bowls, dippers, and spoons of pecan wood, as well as polished gourds, frequently served as utensils.[46]

Bidai women made cane baskets, which are described only as "of curious design and great variety."[47] Some of these Indians are reported to have carried baskets when they went to trade. They would fill these with the articles they desired and then offer to exchange the baskets for their contents. During the early nineteenth century, chairs were fashioned of rattan and hickory and were frequently traded to White settlers.[48]

According to Ker, the Bidai employed "bark canoes" in river transportation. However, it is doubtful that these were anything more than dugouts with the bark left on.[49]

## SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND CUSTOMS

The Bidai comprised a number of small bands. Each was led by a chief. Although only three such bands were noted in 1750, these became proliferated into many more small groups by the beginning of the nineteenth century. Apparently the Bidai were politically united on a tribal basis only briefly—in the 1770's—when the Spaniards appointed Gorgoritos chief of all the Bidai and also head of the so-called Bidai-Akokisa Confederacy.[50]

Concerning their ceremonial life, they were said to be fond of music and

43 J. O. Dyer, "The Pioneer Texas Farmer" (*Galveston Daily News*, July 15, 1923, p. 24).
44 *Ibid.*
45 August 8, 1817, *Bexar Archives.*
46 J. O. Dyer, "The Pioneer Texas Farmer" (*Galveston Daily News*, June 3, 1923, p. 22); Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
47 Bollaert, *op. cit.*, pp. 278-279.
48 Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
49 Ker, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.
50 Herbert E. Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley, 1915), p. 232; Bolton, *Athanase de Mézières*, pp. 74, 260.

dancing.[51] That the Bidai had shamans can be inferred from Espinosa's[52] account of the Hasinai Indians. He wrote that the Hasinai medicine men attributed illness to witchcraft practiced by the Bidai. To counteract this, the Hasinai performed special songs and dances calling on the Bidai medicine men, who supposedly appeared in the form of owls.

Head-flattening was reported, as well as tattooing of the face and the body.[53] The Bidai had an unusual treatment for illness. Patients were placed on high scaffolds, under which a smudge fire was built, so that dense smoke would rise toward them. During an epidemic of typhoid fever in the nineteenth century, as many as thirty of these scaffolds were seen at a Bidai village.[54] In treating dysentery, the Bidai sometimes used the boiled roots and berries of the sparkleberry, or *Vaccinium arboreum*.[55]

## CONCLUSIONS

The assignment of the Bidai Indians to their proper culture area presents some difficulties. Their territory lay between that of the Hasinai, Indians of the agricultural Southeast, and a region inhabited by many small groups of Atakapan, Karankawan, Tonkawan, and Coahuiltecan affiliation exhibiting a rather low level of culture. This area of low development has been termed by Swanton an ethnological "sink" because of its position between the high cultures of Mexico and the southeastern United States. Swanton has included the Bidai among the tribes inhabiting the sink, and has therefore drawn the line of demarcation between this region and the Southeast just east of the Bidai.[56]

Although the Bidai were related linguistically to the Atakapan Indians and resembled all the sink tribes in their semi-migratory life and simple social organization, important cultural differences can be noted. Unlike most of these Indians, the Bidai were never described as an anthropophagous group. What is

51 Ynforme del the. Galván; Ker, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

52 Fray Isidro Félix de Espinosa, *Chrónica apostólica y seráfica de todos los Colegios de Propaganda Fide de esta Nueva España* (Mexico, 1746), pp. 427-428.

53 Dyer, *Historical Sketch*, p. 3; J. O. Dyer, "Indian Names Confusing" (*Galveston Daily News*, December 24, 1922, p. 22). No other information on the personal appearance of the Bidai is available, except that they were said to resemble the Akokisa and the Atakapa, who were dark-skinned Indians with large features, coarse black hair, and short, stocky bodies (J. O. Dyer, *The Lake Charles Atakapas (Cannibals). Period of 1817 to 1820*, Galveston, 1917, pp. 2-3).

54 Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

55 J. O. Dyer, "The Pioneer Texas Farmer" (*Galveston Daily News*, September 2, 1923, p. 18).

56 John R. Swanton, *Southern Contacts of the Indians North of the Gulf of Mexico* (Annaes do XX Congresso Internacional de Americanistas, pp. 53-59, Rio de Janeiro, 1924); Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States*, map 1, facing p. 1; pp. 820-821.

more important, the Bidai were agricultural during much of their recorded history; the tribes in the sink engaged in agriculture rarely or not at all. Many of the latter subsisted primarily on fish and shellfish, items of food which were relatively unimportant in the Bidai economy.

Although knowledge of the details of their culture is limited, it is clear that the Bidai shared certain traits with the Indians of the Southeast. The presence of agriculture is the most significant. For the Bidai, like the Indians of the Southeast, the deer was the most important source of meat and skins; the bear was used next most frequently, but was valued principally for its oil. When available, the bison and the beaver were hunted. Such Bidai items as cane baskets and scaffolds were also present in the Southeast. It is probably significant that the customs of the Bidai were said to resemble those of the Caddo, a Southeastern group.[57] They were often considered as Caddo, and during the middle nineteenth century were placed with them on the reservations in Texas and Oklahoma.

From the foregoing data, it is evident that the Bidai were more closely affiliated with the Indians of the Southeast, and are most accurately described as a marginal Southeastern group.

Austin, Texas

57 Padilla, *op. cit.*

# NOMADISM: MIDDLE EASTERN AND CENTRAL ASIAN

RAPHAEL PATAI

NOMADISM, or wandering pastoralism,[1] is the mode of existence of peoples who derive their livelihood from tending herds of one or more species of domesticated quadrupeds and who wander to find grazing for their cattle. This definition itself indicates that the cultures of nomadic peoples, when viewed in general terms, must be characterized by certain basic similarities. However, students who have described nomadic life have often been preoccupied with these similarities to the extent of neglecting the marked differences in the total complexion of life as between one nomadic people or area and another. A few references may serve to illustrate this point.

According to the Culture-Historical school of ethnology, "the totality of animal breeding nomadic peoples represents in reality a separate independent culture circle of its own."[2] This culture circle, called either "Pastoral Animal Breeding Culture Circle" or "Patriarchal-Extended Familial Culture Circle," is regarded as one of the so-called "Primary Cultures." Its original home is said to have been south-central Siberia where, according to Pater Schmidt, the Ural-Altaian peoples domesticated the three most important quadrupeds, the reindeer, the horse, and the camel. This culture circle, though geographically subdivided into three component groups (a northeastern, a central, and a southwestern), is nevertheless characterized, according to Schmidt and Koppers, by a number of common cultural features, such as the extended, patriarchal family; the privileged position of the firstborn son; basic monogamy with moderate polygamy tolerated; emphasis on the virginity of brides; ceremonial development of the wedding; subordinate position of women; the desire for many children; the *patria potestas;* individualism; blood-revenge; tribal structure, chieftainship, and council; limited or no possession of private property by women and children; land owned jointly by the tribe, other property individually by men; inheritance only to males; two grazing grounds, one for the winter and one for the summer; pronounced differences between rich and poor; political inequality; absence of totemism, mother-right, and initiation rites; cattle-breeding; wandering; laziness of men as against more work performed by women; food of animal origin; preparation of an

1 The word nomad is derived from the Greek verb νέμέιν, to graze.

2 Wilhelm Schmidt and Wilhelm Koppers, *Voelker und Kulturen* (Regensburg, 1924), p. 194.

alcoholic milk-beverage; conservatism; poverty; moderate cultural productivity; preponderance of fur and leather clothing, including trousers; the conical or cylindrical tent; riding; carts; weapons: lasso, reindeer-sling, dagger, lance, spear, battle-axe, sword, sabre, arrow and bow; home industries; barter.[3]

Several of the findings of the Culture-Historical school were anticipated by Julius Lippert, who in his *Kulturgeschichte der Menschheit in ihrem organischen Aufbau* (published in 1886-87) associated with pastoral nomadism such culture traits as the use of fire, the lasso, alcoholic drinks, extensive political organization, father-right, and the extended family.[4]

The characterization of nomadic culture given by the Culture-Historical school must be criticized on two separate counts. First, after stating categorically that all the nomadic peoples constitute one single culture circle, a composite picture of their culture is drawn by taking individual features at random from many different and widely separated nomadic peoples and then flatly declaring that they are characteristic of the culture circle as a whole. Secondly, in many cases the traits are stated in such general terms that they could equally be applied to many other, non-nomadic peoples.

Composite pictures of nomadic peoples have been drawn also by anthropologists not belonging to the Culture-Historical schools. Several generalized traits are attributed to pastoral nomadism by Kaj Birket-Smith. Among these are the extended family, father-rule, tribal pride, warlike trends, military prowess, hospitality, egoism, laziness, and the belief in a Supreme Being.[5] A picture of pastoral nomadism as a form of subsistence is drawn by Robert H. Lowie, with illustrations taken from both the Old and the New Worlds.[6] Ragnar Numelin emphasizes the similar wandering habits and other similar features of nomadism in the Old World, "be it a question of Ural-Altaian Mongolians, wandering Turkomans, or North African nomadic peoples."[7]

Western Central Asia is considered as the original home of pastoral nomadic

3 *Idem*, pp. 194-224, 502-538. Cf. also Wilhelm Schmidt, *Totemismus, viehzuechterischer Nomadismus und Mutterrecht* (Anthropos, vols. 10-11, 1915-16), pp. 307 ff.; Fritz Flor, *Haustiere und Hirtenkulturen* (Wiener Beitraege zur Kulturgeschichte und Linguistik, vol. 1, 1930), pp. 1-238; Wilhelm Schmidt, *The Culture Historical Method of Ethnology* (New York, 1939), pp. 222, 264.

4 Julius Lippert, *The Evolution of Culture* (G. P. Murdock, tr. and ed., London, 1931), pp. 150, 178-179, 196, 320-321, 348-349, 374.

5 Kaj Birket-Smith, *Geschichte der Kultur* (Zurich, 194€), p. 169.

6 Robert H. Lowie, "Subsistence" (in Franz Boas, ed., *General Anthropology*, Boston and New York, 1938), pp. 312-318.

7 Ragnar Numelin, *The Wandering Spirit* (London, 1937), p. 110, cf. p. 109.

culture also by Elizabeth Bacon,[8] who however distinguishes between two nomadic culture areas, the "Paleo-Siberian" and the "Pastoral Nomadic" of central and southern Asia.[9] The geographic locale of the Paleo-Siberian culture is the tundra area which stretches beyond the northern limits of the coniferous forest belt of Siberia. The nomadism of this area will not be considered in the present discussion.

The other nomadic culture area extends, according to Miss Bacon, "from Manchuria to Palestine and from Siberia to the Arabian Sea."[10] By her definition, therefore, this "Pastoral Nomadic" culture area contains, in addition to a considerable number of minor tribes, the following main population groups: the Kazak (numbering something like 4,000,000), the Kirghiz (c. 1,000,000), the Kalmuck (c. 100,000)—these three in Central Asia; the Qashgai, the Bakhtiari, the Lurs, the Kurds, the Arabs, and other nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes of Iran (totalling c. 3,000,000); and the nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples (camel-Bedouin and sheep-and-goat-Bedouin) of Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and the Arabian Peninsula (numbering c. 6,000,000). The purpose of this paper is to inquire into the tenability of including such a great diversity of widely separated population groups into one single culture area, and to attempt a more precise delimitation of the areas inhabited by nomadic groups.

To begin with, it must be pointed out that southwest Asian nomadism cannot with certainty be regarded as being historically dependent upon a pastoral nomadic culture which "was developed somewhere around the middle of the second millennium BC" in the steppes of western central Asia.[11] The chronology in itself contradicts such a hypothesis. In southwestern Asia wandering pastoral nomads were an important population element as early as the third millennium BC. A Sumerian hymn from this period describes the Amorites of the west as follows:

> The weapon is (his) companion . . .
> Who knows no submission,
> Who eats uncooked flesh,
> Who has no house in his lifetime,
> Who does not bury his dead companion.[12]

The outward appearance of the nomadic Amorites of about 2000 BC

8 Elizabeth Bacon, *A Preliminary Attempt to Determine the Culture Areas of Asia* (Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, vol. 2, pp. 117-132, 1946), p. 123.

9 *Idem*, p. 121.

10 *Idem*, p. 123.

11 *Ibid.*

12 Edward Chiera, *Sumerian Religious Texts* (Crozier Theological Seminary Babylonian Publications, vol. 1, Upland, Pa., 1924), p. 20 f.

may be reconstructed without difficulty from the mural paintings of Beni Hasan, which portray a nomadic chieftain named Absha with his clansmen and their families, 37 in all, about 1900 B. C. Asses are used for transportation. Both men and women are dressed in elaborately woven, many-colored woolen tunics; the men wear sandals and the women shoes. The men are armed with composite bows, heavy throw-sticks and javelins. One of them carries an eight-stringed lyre.[13]

The main Amorite movement in Syria and Mesopotamia occurred between 2200 and 2000 BC and from c. 2000 on "the nomads seem to have become more interested in settling down than in making fresh raids. . . ."[14] The herds of the Amorites consisted of cattle, sheep, goats, and asses.[15] The domestication of the camel, and with it the possibility of utilizing the wide open spaces of the deserts, took place at a much later period, and probably does not antedate the outgoing Bronze Age. It was not before c. 1100 BC that the great irruption of camel-riding Midianites into Palestine took place, and that the camel appears on pictorial representations.[16]

Camel-nomadism is today the most characteristic way of life of the pastoral peoples inhabiting the Syrian and Arabian deserts and the Sahara. The basic resemblances in the culture of these peoples by far outweigh the local variations, so that the nomads of this entire area can properly be regarded as sharing one single culture.[17] This vast desert region is characterized by great extremes of temperature, by almost no rain at any time of the year, and by a very scanty vegetation of low grasses and drought-resistant bushes. Since the introduction and the gradual spread of the domesticated camel from the tenth century BC on, these inhospitable lands have been the home of pastoral nomadic tribes who rely mainly on the camel as a source of food (milk and milk-products, rarely meat), a supply of raw material for shelter, clothing, leather utensils and trappings, fuel, and a means of transportation. Under the present climatic and geographical conditions some four-fifths of the entire Middle East (that is southwestern Asia and north Africa) would be completely uninhabitable without the "Ship of the Desert," as the camel has been called by his masters, who in their turn have been named by others "the parasites of the camel." The typical mode of life of the true nomads, or camel-nomads, is seasonal wandering with their camel-herds within a definite but usually very extensive tribal territory, in

13 William F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity* (Baltimore, 1940), p. 121.

14 *Idem*, p. 120; cf. p. 109.

15 *Idem*, pp. 121-122.

16 *Idem*, p. 120.

17 Raphael Patai, *A Survey of Near Eastern Anthropology* (Transactions, New York Academy of Sciences, ser. 2, vol. 10, no. 6, 1948), p. 204. Cf. also Robert Montagne, *La Civilisation du Desert* (Paris, 1947).

the dry summer months near the steppe belt which in most places separates the true desert from the cultivated or cultivable land inhabited by settled agriculturalists, while in the cooler and wetter winter season reaching far out into the heart of the desert.

All over the Middle East also semi-nomads, or sheep-and-goat-nomads, can be found, occupying much smaller wandering territories nearer the steppe and the cultivated regions. The Amorites of four thousand years ago must have lead a life similar in many respects to that of these semi-nomads of today.

A special kind of nomadism, called "transhumance," is practised sporadically all over the mountainous regions of the Middle East, but most typically and generally on the plateau of Iran, Afghanistan, and Baluchistan. This is a kind of "vertical" nomadism, as against the "horizontal" nomadism discussed above. The nomads practising transhumance spend the summer in the mountains and the winter in the lower levels of the plateau or in the valleys within the area.

Seasonal wandering and animal husbandry are the outstanding cultural characteristics which may lead one to class the Middle Eastern nomads together with the nomads of Central Asia. These extremely generalized traits, however, are merely convenient labels which cover highly diverse actual contents.

Great differences exist, first of all, in the geographical environment which is the habitat of the Middle Eastern and Central Asian nomads respectively. As against the Middle Eastern deserts with their extremely scanty rain and very long, hot and dry summers, the steppes of Central Asia boast a richer and more evenly distributed precipitation (only July and August being rainless), which in the winter takes the form of snow. In both places great variations of temperature exist between the heat of the day and the cold of the night, but as to annual variations, the Middle East has great heat in the summer and moderate cold in the winter, while the similarly great summer heat of Central Asia is replaced in the winter by very severe cold.

The main herds of the Middle Eastern true nomads consist of camels (the one-humped dromedary); horses are few and are used by the rich only as luxury-mounts for hunting or in raiding and warfare. The semi-nomads of the Middle East possess large flocks of sheep and goats, with the ass or the camel used as beasts of burden. In Central Asia,[18] the horse assumes the role the camel has in the Middle East. The Kazaks and other peoples in this region have large herds of horses, regarding the horse as the prestige-animal, the gauge of values and the symbol of beauty, comparable to the role of the camel in the

18 My thanks are due to the Human Relations Area Files, Inc., New Haven, where a considerable part of the Central Asian material utilized in this paper was gathered.

Middle East. The horse is ridden; its milk is drunk: one of the main foods is the *kumiss,* the slightly intoxicating fermented milk, which takes the place of the non-alcoholic *leben,* sour camel-milk and other milk-products of the camel-nomads; its meat is eaten; its fat is salted and smoked; its hide is used for straps and lines; its hair is plaited into cords, halters, and ropes. Camels, mainly of the two-humped and heavier Bactrian variety, are as rare in Central Asia as are horses in the Middle East, are used as beasts of burden only, are rarely ridden and never milked. Among the Kirghiz the yak replaces even this occasional use of the camel. No distinction corresponding to that between camel-nomads and sheep-and-goat-nomads in the Middle East can be found in Central Asia. Here the same population-groups which own large horse-herds also own large herds of sheep, smaller ones of goats, as well as cattle. Most of the ewes' milk is churned into butter which is salted and packed for storage, while in the Middle East camel nomads make no butter and the semi-nomads use only *semn,* clarified or melted butter made of goats' milk.

The typical shelter for both the full nomads and the semi-nomads of the Middle East is the black hair tent. This consists basically of one single large rectangular and oblong piece of tent-cloth stretched upon a number of more or less vertically standing tent-poles and held in place by long outstretched tent-ropes pegged to the ground.[19] The tent-cloth is, in most cases, made of goats' hair, to which other secondary materials are added. Nowadays most true Bedouin tribes buy their tent-cloth from villagers or in the markets of the towns. The black hair tent is contiguously predominant from Mauretania in the west to Afghanistan and Baluchistan in the east, and reoccurs again in Tibet after a break of some four hundred miles.

The utilization of tanned animal skins (of goats, sheep, gazelles, antelopes, oxen, and zebus) in place of the woven tent-cloth, which is found typically among the Touaregs of the central Sahara and occasionally also in other places in the Middle East (e.g. in southern Arabia and among the Sleyb in northern Arabia), seems to be a survival of the more ancient method of tent-construction of pre-Islamic times.[20]

The characteristic black hair tent disappears as one proceeds from the Iranian Plateau into the Central Asian steppe, its place being taken by the *yurt* or the *kibitka,* the round, cylindrical, dome-capped tent, built around a complex and solid framework of lattice-like rods of willow tied together with strips of raw-

19 C. G. Feilberg, *La Tente Noire* (Copenhagen, 1944).

20 Georg Jacob, *Altarabisches Beduinenleben* (Berlin, 1897), p. 41 f.; Feilberg, *La Tente Noire,* pp. 139-144.

hide. The woven tent-cloth of the Middle Eastern nomads is replaced here by a felt covering made of sheep's fleece, being either grey or white.[21] The yurt often boasts of a wooden door, and in general contains much more solid and wooden furnishings than is the case with the almost bare Bedouin tent, including usually a low wooden table, sometimes a wooden bed, both unheard of among the Middle Eastern nomads.

While the Middle Eastern nomads live in their hair tents all the year round, the Central Asian nomads live in their yurts only from April to early November approximately. The remainder of the year is spent in the great majority of cases in permanent winter quarters which in old times were merely more substantially built and reinforced yurts, but which have more recently assumed the shape of solid huts, mostly built of sods of turf, but frequently also of a wooden or reed frame plastered with mud. These houses are rectangular as a rule, have flat roofs made of willow branches and reeds covered with turf, and their floor-level is often sunk deeply in the earth. The family occupies a group of such buildings surrounded by a wall and enclosing a courtyard. The herds are kept in sheds or corrals around the house, and their food is supplemented by hay collected for this purpose during the summer.

Of the three main population elements of the Central Asian steppe, the Kalmuck have traditionally supplemented their diet derived from the products of their animal husbandry with edible bulbs and other wild foods, the gathering of which is carried out on a considerable scale; the Kazak carry out sporadic cultivation of millet, wheat, rye, and in the south also of rice; the Kirghiz engage more in agriculture, raising barley, millet, and wheat in the valleys for both human consumption and as winter fodder for their horses. Thus we recognize that animal husbandry in its pure and unadulterated Middle Eastern form does not exist among the Central Asian steppe peoples who invariably alternate nomadic life with a sedentary period, and supplement their animal husbandry with a modicum of agriculture.

Significant differences can be observed between the Central Asian nomads and the Middle Eastern nomads also with regard to material equipment other than shelter and furnishings. Pottery and basketwork, both of which play an important role among the utensils of the Middle Eastern nomads, are very rarely used, and never made, among the Central Asian steppe dwellers. On the other hand, articles of wood, like buckets, cradles, chests, plates, bowls, basins, carvings —all non-existent among the Middle Eastern nomads—are widely used by them, and are either made by anybody, or are the work of specially skilled native wood-

21 Feilberg, *La Tente Noire*, pp. 161-164.

workers, or are purchased at markets. Common to both societies are household utensils of leather and metal, though here, too, leather is more widely used in Central Asia than in the Middle East.

Before the introduction of firearms, the chief weapons of the Central Asian nomads were the bow and arrow, the long slim lance, the large iron battle-axe, and the long-lashed and thick whip. Of all these only the lance is found in the Middle East, where, in addition to it, the dagger, the sword, and the saber are the main weapons, with the shield appearing more occasionally. To these is added in southern Arabia the heavy straight throwing-stick, a survival from Amorite days.

The clothing of the Central Asians consists of leather or woolen trousers tucked into high boots, one or more long padded coats reaching to the ankles, over which in very cold weather a shorter sheepskin jacket is worn. The head is covered with an embroidered skull-cap, over which a conical felt hat is worn with the brim often turned up in horn-like fashion. The women's clothing is like that of the men, with a shorter coat, more gaily colored, and a foot-high turban on their heads. Well-to-do people affect silk, velvet, and furs with gold and silver embroidery.

A long shirt reaching to the heels, a second similar garment on top of it, then the sleeveless cloak (*aba*), are the typical clothes of the Middle Eastern nomad. A kerchief held in place by a rope-crown covers his head; his foot is either bare or is protected by a simple flat sandal. The women's clothes are similar here too to that of the men, but instead of gaudy colors they are monotonous and dark, often black.

In Central Asia the men have clean shaven heads and grow scraggly beards on the chin; in the Middle East the typical nomad's head is adorned with locks braided into long plaits, while the beard is trimmed short.

The family, which is the basic social unit in both areas, is patrilocal, patrilineal, and to a considerable extent patriarchal, among the Middle Eastern nomads. The family is usually headed by an elderly male, and its membership comprises all his sons with their wives and children, and the unmarried daughters and granddaughters (sons' daughters). If the grandfather dies, the extended family breaks up into as many new units as there are sons. In the Middle Eastern extended family, therefore, all the male members are lineal descendants of the actual head of the family. The entire extended family resides together, camps together in one cluster of tents pitched usually in the same order in every new camping ground. Polygyny is permitted but rarely practised.

In Central Asia the family shows a similar structure, but here upon the death of the original family head the family does not break up into new units headed by his sons, but remains together and the headship is assumed by the eldest surviving brother. This actually means that the typical extended family in Central Asia consists of men (and their wives and unmarried daughters) who, though closely related to one another, are not all descendants of the present head of the family. The Central Asian extended family is, therefore, larger, as well as less closely knit, than the Middle Eastern.

The secession of the eldest son or of the older sons from the family fold, supplied by livestock given to him or to them by the head of the family, is also a trait which distinguishes the Central Asian nomads from the Middle Eastern. Under normal conditions no son would leave his father, his extended family, and his *hamula* (cf. below) among the Middle Eastern nomads. Blood ties mean here invariably local ties, and the severance of the latter would signify the cutting off of the former.

A complementary feature among the Central Asian nomads is the inheritance of the patriarch's property upon his death by his younger sons only, i.e. those who are still at home. This trait would be meaningless among the Middle Eastern nomads, among whom all the sons are members of the household at the time of their father's death and share in the inheritance of his herds, thus being enabled to set up new independent households of their own.

An additional important difference in the family structure stems from the prevalent and customary choice of spouses in the two societies. Among the Central Asian nomads marriage is exogamous, bride and groom having to belong to two different clans. In the Middle East marriage is endogamous, and there is furthermore the preferential mating of a man with his father's brother's daughter. This is not merely a custom, but an inalienable right, and should a father wish to give his daughter in marriage to a person other than his own brother's son, he can do so only after the latter gives his consent, which as a rule is obtained only in exchange for a consideration. The practice of such a very close in-marriage has far-reaching effects on the structure and functioning of the extended family, and the significance of the differences between such a family and an exogamous extended family should be clear.

Among the nomads of the Middle East women are required to conform to a very strict moral code. With a very few sporadic exceptions, premarital loss of virginity, if discovered, is punishable by death, a punishment which is meted out also to a married woman if caught in adultery. It is the duty and the privilege

of the culprit's father or brother, but not of her husband, to thus punish her. Breaches of the sexual code by men are violations of the gravest category, punished by blood-revenge which is carried out by the family of the offended party. In Central Asia, premarital meetings and connections between lovers are condoned; breaches of morality are regarded with leniency; and even in marriage adultery by either party is not uncommon or particularly frowned upon. In Central Asia a wife can divorce her husband for a number of officially recognized grounds; in the Middle East only the husband has the right to divorce his wife. In general, women enjoy a much greater freedom in Central Asia than they do in the Middle East. Among the Kazaks women take part in assemblies, join games and songs, are not veiled, and respond readily to jests interchanged with men. These jokes, especially when made by the parents of the husband to his wife, are often sheer obscenity. Also at dances, sexual intercourse is simulated in pantomime in the most lustful manner, to the great pleasure of the audience, men and women, including young girls. Such a public display is quite foreign to the peoples of the Middle East where matters of sex, though discussed separately by men among themselves or by women among themselves, can never constitute a subject for public enjoyment or entertainment, and where sexual and physical modesty is the psychological concomitant of the strict moral code.

The Central Asian nomads differ considerably from the Middle Eastern nomads also with regard to social organization. Social groupings in general show a greater structural complexity, as well as a greater uniformity throughout Central Asia, than is the case in the Middle Eastern nomadic societies. Several families form an *aul;* several *aul* make up a sub-clan; several sub-clans constitute a clan (*sök*). Units larger than the clan are the tribe, comprising several clans. The Kazak tribes, the most numerous in the area, form three great super-tribal units, called hordes, which in former times were headed by great and powerful chiefs or khans.

Within the local group (or wandering unit), there is a division into three classes: the aristocratic descendants of khans and the most wealthy herd-owners, using white felt tents and called "White Bones"; the common people, using grey felt tents and called "Black Bones"; and the servile class of poor tribesmen, including many whose parents or ancestors were slaves before the abolition of slavery in 1859, and who often serve as herdsmen and menials.

The first difference which catches the eye upon comparing this social structure with the corresponding organization of Middle Eastern nomadic social life is that in the Middle East no class structure is found within the tribes singly. There

is no aristocracy in the typical Bedouin tribe, and no institutionalized expression of differences in economic standing. All the people born into the tribe are equals: only individuals or families who attach themselves to the tribe from the outside seeking its protection, and the few slaves still owned by a few wealthy *sheikhs* (tribal chieftains), are of a lower status.

On the other hand, in the Middle East greater stress is put on differences in status and prestige among various tribes. Tribes of a higher status look down with contempt upon tribes of a lower status and do not intermarry with them. This definite and well-recognized scale of tribal nobility has, to my knowledge, no counterpart in the social structure of the Central Asian nomads.

As to the organization of the Middle Eastern nomadic tribe itself, this too shows a composite picture not unlike that of the Central Asian nomads. Several extended families (*ahl*) form a *hamula,* several *hamula* constitute an *ashira,* and several *ashira* make up a *qabila* (tribe). Several *qabila* may form a tribal confederation, or people, like that of the Aneze or the Shammar. There are, however, two important points to be emphasized when considering the tribal structure of the Middle Eastern Bedouin: in numbers of tents making up the single social units, as well as in the various unit-levels leading up from the family to the tribe, there are very great variations. This extreme flexibility is matched by an equally great mobility within the tribal or super-tribal unit: a sub-tribe can grow and advance into the position of a tribe, or vice versa; two or more units can join together to form a new grouping, or one can break up into two or more. Great variability, flexibility, and mobility are therefore the distinguishing features of the Middle Eastern nomadic tribes.

Central Asia lies well within the northeastern outposts of Islam.[22] With the capture of Samarkand by the Arabs in 706, the door was thrown open for the spread of Islam throughout Central Asia, but the conversion of the nomadic tribes of the area was only slowly and superficially accomplished. Pre-Islamic traditions survive beneath the thin veneer of officially adopted Islam which was a foreign importation from a far-away land. In the Middle East, and especially among the nomads of Arabia, where Islam was a local outgrowth from the older popular religious doctrines and practices, it has absorbed much of the older traits, so that often it is difficult to distinguish between "popular" and "official" religion. Though theoretically and conceptually extremely proud of being members of the True Faith, in practice a great deal of laxity characterizes the Bedouins' observance of the specifically Koranic commandments, in sharp contrast to the rites

22 The following discussion leaves out of consideration the eastern tribes of Central Asia among whom a form of Lamaistic Buddhism predominates.

and tenets of the older popular religion which play a much greater role in their outlook and everyday life. The "Five Pillars of the Faith" which constitute the solid foundations of religious life among the settled populations of the Middle East, are even in the best case upheld only in a very lukewarm manner by the nomadic peoples of the area, with a few exceptions such as the fanatical adherents of the puritanical Wahhabi sect in central Arabia. The first of these "Five Pillars of the Faith," the belief in, and the declaration of, the oneness of Allah (the so-called *Tawhid*), is basic to Moslems everywhere, but among the Bedouin this theoretical concept is greatly impaired by the universal belief in a great multitude of spirits and demons of many different kinds, all of whom constantly interfere with the lives of the humans, while Allah himself is thought of as remote and detached. The "Pillar" of alms-giving has no practical significance, its place being more than adequately filled by the practice of hospitality and the protection of the oppressed. The remaining three ritual "Pillars"—the pilgrimage to Mecca, the fasting in the month of Ramadhan, and the five daily prayers—are largely neglected. And as to the religious duty of praying in assembly on Friday, many Bedouin cannot even keep track of the days of the week, and know which day is Friday only when so informed by settled people.

In addition to the "Five Pillars," however, there is a huge body of popular pre-Islamic customs, traditions, and ritual observances which have either been incorporated into official Islam, or, at least, have been and are tolerated by it; and it is this facet of religion in which Bedouin Mohammedanism most typically expresses itself. Such rites as circumcision, marriage, burial, annual feasts; beliefs in omens, dreams, spirits, demons, the evil eye; practices connected with these beliefs, such as divination, interpretation of dreams, avoidance and propitiation of spirits, vows and sacrifices, charms and amulets against the evil eye and other evil powers; as well as institutions and personnel administering to these needs—all of which are older in the Middle East than Islam, older even than Christianity and Judaism—these make up the bulk of the religious life of the Middle Eastern nomads to this day.

The differences between the religious doctrines and practices of the Middle Eastern nomads and those of the Central Asian nomads originate precisely in the largely similar developments in both areas after the introduction of Islam. Just as Islam was unable to completely eliminate and replace the older religious beliefs and practices among the Middle Eastern nomads, it was unsuccessful in achieving this also among the nomads of Central Asia. This means that the

complex of religion in both areas contains a large number of pre-Islamic and therefore dissimilar traits.

In general, Islamic observances are even less common among the Central Asian nomads than among the nomads of the Middle East. The "Five Pillars of the Faith" are found in the most rudimentary form only. Also the Islamic food laws—such as the prohibition of drinking alcoholic beverages and blood, and eating an animal which has died a natural death—are either completely ignored or largely neglected. In contrast to the Middle East, in Central Asia remnants of the old religion do not readily blend with the imported official religion of Islam. Shamanism is still rampant, the shaman *(baksa)* being usually an itinerant practitioner, an adept at sorcery, divination, magical medicine, and prestidigitation. He is a close relative of the shaman of northern Siberia, habitually working himself up into a state of frenzy for the performance of his miraculous cures. Traces of fire-worship also survive; interpretation of dreams and divination from cracks appearing in the shoulderblade of a sheep in fire or by means of balls of dung, are practised. Horses are sacrificed; though the former custom of burying a horse with its dead master has become replaced by the cutting off of the horse's tail and mane and placing a horse's skull by the grave. The funeral feast is the occasion of much drinking, horse-racing, and other games, including performances by professional male singers or shamans. The burial complex is much more developed in Central Asia than it is in the Middle East: the tombs are more elaborate, often capped by sculptured monuments including the representation of animals in direct contravention of the traditional Moslem law.

The differences pointed out between the culture of the Middle Eastern and of Central Asian nomads with regard to specific responses to the geographical environment; the economic basis of life; the type of shelter and other material equipment such as arms, utensils, and clothing; sexual morality, the family and social organization; and, finally, religion, are certainly of the same order of magnitude as those between any one of these two and the culture of the Paleo-Siberian area. It is therefore suggested that a clear distinction be made between a Middle Eastern nomadic culture and a Central Asian nomadic culture.[23] The latter can undoubtedly be regarded as the predominating culture of a definite geographical area for which the designation Central Asian Pastoral Nomadic Culture Area seems most appropriate.

23 Such a distinction, incidentally, has been made by geographers. Cf. C. F. Jones, *Economic Geography* (New York, 1941), p. 101, who distinguishes between three major regions of nomadic herding in the Old World: Central Asia, Southwestern Asia and North Africa, and the Tundra.

The culture of the Middle Eastern nomads, on the other hand, is not the predominating culture in the geographical area inhabited by them. This area is characterized by the presence in all its parts of a much more numerous sedentary agricultural population which is the carrier of a culture closely related to, but at the same time distinct from, the culture of the Middle Eastern nomads. The close interaction and interdependence of the nomadic and settled population groups in every corner of the Middle East[24] is a very strong indication of the advisability of treating their cultures as mutually complementary elements of one single culture area. It is suggested that this area be designated as the Middle Eastern Culture Area, though the delineation and analysis of its main characteristics must be deferred for another occasion.

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24 Patai, *A Survey of Near Eastern Anthropology.*

# SOUTH AMERICAN CULTURE AREAS

GEORGE PETER MURDOCK

THE CULTURE AREA CONCEPT, though long since divested of most of the theoretical significance ascribed to it by Wissler, still retains its classificatory importance. It is nearly as useful in ordering the immense range of ethnographic variation as is the Linnaean system in the ordering of biological forms.

For the South American continent, until recently, anthropologists have had only the tentative and impressionistic classification by Wissler.[1] The publication of the monumental *Handbook of South American Indians*[2] makes possible, at last, an approach to a definitive areal formulation.

Despite the immense merit of the *Handbook*, which places the anthropological world in deep debt to the editor, the latter's delineation of culture areas leaves room for improvement. The present writer finds it unsatisfactory on two counts. First, since it utilizes all available cultural data and these are often scanty and of different kinds for different areas, it frequently employs criteria for one area where comparable data cannot be cited to differentiate other areas.

A second and more serious objection is Steward's excessive use of negative criteria. His many "marginal" and "submarginal" areas are based primarily on the absence of traits found in the more complex cultures. The writer, having worked in "marginal" areas like the Plateau, is deeply impressed with the richness of simpler cultures in positive characteristics, and he would define the areas in which they appear primarily in terms of such positive cultural content.

With these objectives in mind it seemed worth while to reassess the data assembled in the *Handbook* and to refer for additional evidence on crucial points to the substantial collections of the Cross-Cultural Survey on the South American Indians. A schedule was drawn up of a selected number of important traits and complexes upon which comparable information is fairly widely available, and the relevant data were abstracted and tabulated for every tribe or group of closely related tribes on the continent. These were then compared, ignoring all other evidence, and a classification into culture areas was made on the basis of the

1 C. Wissler, *The American Indian* (New York, 1917).

2 J. H. Steward, ed., *Handbook of South American Indians* (Bulletin, Bureau of American Ethnology, no. 143, 6 vols., Washington, 1946-50).

similarities and differences discovered. The major types of information covered by the schedule were as follows:

1. Linguistic affiliation.
2. The incidence and relative importance of the major techniques for securing food.
3. The presence, absence, and relative importance of domesticated animals and the principal cultivated plants.
4. The participation of the sexes in agricultural operations other than land clearance.
5. The incidence of certain selected crafts of varying levels of complexity, notably pottery, loom-weaving, and metallurgy.
6. The prevailing house types and household size.
7. The relative degree of development of trade, social classes, and political institutions.
8. The prevailing form, mode, and rules of marriage.
9. The prevailing types of kin and local groups and kinship terminology.

The twenty-four culture areas emerging from this analysis are listed, named, and characterized below, in an order starting from Central America, descending the Pacific coast, ascending the Atlantic coast, zigzagging through the Amazonian basin, and ending with Venezuela and the West Indies. The accompanying map shows the approximate location of the several areas. It distorts actual distributions only by favoring backward areas interpenetrated by more advanced peoples to the extent of giving the former a slightly falsified continuous distribution.

## 1. ISTHMIAN AREA

This area connects the Mayan center of Middle American civilization with the Colombian area, the northernmost extension of intensive Andean civilization. The lowland sections of this territory, like Honduras, eastern Nicaragua, and the Pacific coast of Colombia, are occupied by peoples of relatively simple cultures. Interspersed among them, however, are more advanced peoples, especially in Panama, Costa Rica, and western Nicaragua, who possess many of the essential features of the more complex civilizations to the north and south, and who form a bridge across which elements originating in either could have diffused to the other. The dominant linguistic stock of the area is Chibchan, but the Choco in Colombia and the tribes of Honduras and Nicaragua belong to other and usually lesser stocks. Subsistence depends upon a relatively intensive milpa type of agricul-

FIG. 1. Culture areas of South America.

ture, with hunting and fishing commonly of only subsidiary importance. The staple crops are maize and sweet manioc, the former usually dominating in highland and the latter in lowland regions. Beans and sweet potatoes are also important, but bitter manioc is a post-Conquest importation. Field work tends to be done mainly by men in the highland tribes, by women in the lowlands. Dogs are kept, and the turkey is domesticated in upland Nicaragua. Good ceramics and the loom-weaving of cotton are nearly universal, and work in gold and occasionally in copper occurs sporadically through Central America. The prevailing house type is a rectangular thatched structure accommodating a number of families. Large towns are found only in highland Nicaragua, but villages are aggregated into petty states under hereditary paramount chiefs except in a few lowland tribes. Social class distinctions are usually well developed. Though information on social organization is exceedingly meager, matrilocal residence appears to be common, and several Isthmian tribes are reported to possess genuine exogamous matrilineal sibs.

## 2. COLOMBIAN AREA

The Andean highlands of Colombia and adjacent Ecuador are occupied by a series of peoples nearly all of whom speak languages of the Chibchan stock, the few exceptions speaking Choco, Coche, or unidentified tongues. Their cultures, though closely affiliated with those of the Isthmian and Caribbean areas, show rather more directly the influence of Peruvian civilization. Hunting and fishing are everywhere subordinate to intensive agriculture. Besides maize, sweet manioc, beans, sweet potatoes, and fruit trees, which extend to the Isthmian and Caribbean areas, quinoa, potatoes, and other Peruvian crops assume importance. Women perform most agricultural operations except clearing the land, though in a few tribes the men participate on an equal basis. Domesticated guinea pigs are widely kept. Ceramics and loom-woven cotton fabrics are universal, and most tribes are conversant with metallurgy in gold and copper. Trade is highly developed, and regular markets are widespread. The Chibcha have large palisaded towns, but most of the other tribes live in small villages, hamlets, or communities of scattered homesteads. The dwellings themselves, which usually accommodate only a single nuclear or polygynous family, are often raised on posts. They are circular or occasionally rectangular in shape with thatched roofs and walls most commonly of wattle and daub. Although local autonomy prevails in some regions, communities are more commonly aggregated into districts under paramount chiefs or even, as among the Chibcha, into feudal states with kings. Differentiated social classes are the rule. Polygyny, of either sororal or unspecified form, is reported

for most tribes. Marriage, at least in some regions, is effected by payment of a bride-price or by the exchange of sisters, and residence appears to be generally patrilocal. However, matrilineal succession, reported for the Chibcha and several other tribes, suggests matrilineal descent, which is specifically attested for the Pantangoro and Amani.

### 3. PERUVIAN AREA

The Andean highlands and Pacific coast of Peru and adjacent Ecuador and Bolivia formerly supported the highest civilization of aboriginal South America—similar to but appreciably more complex than the cultures of the Colombian area to the north and the Chilean area to the south. The inhabitants spoke languages of many independent stocks, of which Aymaran, Quechuan, and Yuncan were the most widely distributed. Hunting and gathering contributed relatively little to the food supply, and fishing assumed importance only on the coast and on Lake Titicaca. The economy rested primarily upon an unusually intensive agriculture, often conducted by irrigation and the terracing of fields and supplemented on the coast by the use of guano as fertilizer. More than fifty different species of domesticated plants were cultivated, the staples being potatoes, quinoa, and oca at the highest elevations, maize at lower altitudes, and beans, squash, sweet manioc, peanuts, peppers, fruit trees, and cotton in the deeper valleys and on the coast. Women did the field work in Ecuador, but both sexes participated equally in Peru and highland Bolivia. Domesticated animals included llamas, alpacas, dogs, guinea pigs, and the Muscovy duck. The herding of llamas and alpacas rivaled agriculture in economic importance in the high plateaus. Crafts included superior ceramics, excellent loom-weaving in cotton and wool, and expert metallurgy in gold, silver, copper, and tin. The only boats, however, were rafts. Over most of the area these were crudely made from bundles of reeds, but in a restricted section of the northern coast somewhat better sailing rafts were constructed of balsa wood. Trade was highly developed, and was facilitated by an admirable system of roads. Architecture reached its climax in magnificent temples, palaces, and fortresses of brick or stone masonry. The common people, however, lived in rectangular single-family huts with thatched gable or hip roofs and walls of stone, sod, adobe, or wattle-and-daub. Among the Aymara, but not elsewhere, these were grouped in extended family compounds surrounded by a wall. Social classes were sharply differentiated, and the entire area, together with parts of the Colombian and Chilean areas, was politically integrated under the massive Inca empire. Marriage was strictly monogamous except in the noble classes, and involved neither bride-price nor bride-service. Local endogamy prevailed, and resi-

dence was patrilocal. Though inheritance and succession were patrilineal, descent was bilateral, and kinship terms were of the Hawaiian type. The modern Aymara possess exogamous patri-lineages, but there is no evidence that such groups are aboriginal.

### 4. CHILEAN AREA

In northern and central Chile and in the adjacent mountainous portion of northwestern Argentina reside a group of tribes characterized by a distinctive variant of Andean civilization. Linguistically they fall into a number of isolated stocks—the Araucanian, Atacaman, Comechingonan, Diaguitan, Huarpean, and the unidentified languages of the Omaguaca and Tonocote nations. All these peoples practice intensive agriculture, commonly with the aid of irrigation. Maize is the staple crop, but beans, squash, quinoa, potatoes, and other plants are also cultivated. Manioc and sweet potatoes, however, are absent. Women do nearly all agricultural work, at least among the Araucanians. Fishing and shellfishing are important only on the coast, and gathering only among the inland Araucanians, who make extensive use of piñon nuts. Hunting is everywhere a distinctly subsidiary activity. In all of the aboriginal economies herding holds a position approaching, or in some instances even exceeding, that of agriculture. In addition to smaller animals like dogs and guinea pigs, which are sporadically reported, all tribes raise llamas for their wool, and the Comechingon and Tonocote are even said to have domesticated the rhea or American ostrich. Loom-woven woolen fabrics, made by all tribes, provide a basis for extensive trade with the north. Pottery likewise has a universal distribution, and metallurgy in copper and bronze (sometimes also in silver and gold) is attested for all tribes except the Comechingon and Huarpe. The people live in sedentary villages of rectangular houses, occasionally protected by stockades. The Araucanians have multi-family houses with wooden frames and thatched roofs, but elsewhere the prevailing house type is a smaller structure with dry-masonry walls and a flat roof covered with poles, reeds, and mud. Political integration under paramount chiefs was apparently achieved aboriginally only by the Araucanians and Omaguaca, but most of the tribes of the area were ultimately conquered and absorbed by the Inca empire. Marriage is contracted by payment of a bride-price and is commonly polygynous, especially in the sororal form. Inheritance and succession are patrilineal. Other data on social organization are available only for the Araucanians, who are characterized by patrilocal residence, extended families, exogamous patri-lineages, and kinship terminology of the Omaha type.

### 5. FUEGIAN AREA

The coast and offshore islands of Chile and Tierra del Fuego are occupied by the Chono, Alacaluf, and Yahgan tribes, who speak isolated or unidentified languages. They practice no agriculture, gather few wild vegetal products, and hunt to only a very limited extent. Subsistence depends primarily upon the collecting of mussels and other shellfish, supplemented by fishing, the pursuit of seals and porpoises, and the catching of marine birds. The people make good bark or sometimes plank canoes, but they lack completely such technological arts as pottery, loom-weaving, and metallurgy. They lead a migratory life in small bands and live in single-family dwellings of dome or beehive shape constructed of flexible poles covered with skins or bark. Class distinctions are lacking, though the Chono occasionally hold war captives as slaves. The Alacaluf and Yahgan do not even have local headmen. Marriage is monogamous except for very rare instances of sororal polygyny, and involves no bride-price. Residence is initially matrilocal for a few months, but neolocal or patrilocal thereafter. Descent is bilateral, though patrilocal residence and local exogamy make the band a patrideme among the Yahgan. This tribe has a kinship system of the Hawaiian type.

### 6. PAMPEAN AREA

The steppes and pampas of Argentina and Uruguay are the homeland of a group of Chonan, Puelchean, and Guaicuran tribes of fundamentally similar culture. Except for a small enclave on the delta of the Rio de la Plata and the islands of its estuary, occupied by intrusive Tupian and other tribes who subsist by fishing and maize agriculture, the economy of the area is based primarly upon hunting, especially of the guanaco and rhea, supplemented by a certain amount of gathering, particularly of algarroba pods among the northern tribes. Fishing is insignificant and agriculture unknown, except in the afore-mentioned enclave. The dog is the only domesticated animal, but during the eighteenth century all the tribes save those in the extreme south acquired horses and adopted an equestrian mode of life paralleling in many respects that of the Plains Indians of North America. A nomadic life in politically autonomous bands is general throughout the area, and dwellings are either temporary skin windbreaks or insubstantial rectangular or conical structures of poles covered with skins, leaves, or transportable rush mats. Crude pottery is made except by the Ona and Puelche, but metallurgy is absent, and loom-weaving is practiced only by the Tehuelche, who weave fabrics of guanaco wool. Class distinctions, though probably originally

lacking, developed among the horse nomads, who usually kept war captives as slaves and recognized social gradations based on wealth or military prowess. Marriage is monogamous, qualified by occasional polygyny, especially of the sororal type. A bride-price is customary except among the Ona. Residence is universally patrilocal or neolocal, though in two or three tribes it is initially matrilocal for a few months. Descent is bilateral and succession patrilineal in all instances, but inheritance rules are lacking because of the practice of destroying a man's personal property at the time of his death. Kinship terms are reported only for the Ona, where they are of Eskimo type.

### 7. CHACO AREA

In the Gran Chaco reside a series of tribes of the Guaicuran, Matacoan, Mascoian, Vilelan, and Zamucoan linguistic stocks who all practice a certain amount of rather desultory agriculture but subsist primarily by hunting, fishing, and the gathering of algarroba pods and other wild products. The principal crops are maize, sweet manioc, beans, and pumpkins. They are cultivated variously by the men (Mascoi, Pilaga), the women (Choroti, Mataco), and both sexes (Ashluslay, Toba). Most of the tribes have adopted horses, cattle, sheep, and goats from the Spaniards and depend today in some measure upon herding. A semi-nomadic life in politically autonomous bands or temporary villages is the norm. Dwellings are typically circular or elliptical in shape with a frame of poles fixed in the ground and a dome-shaped or conical roof of mats, rushes, palm leaves, or grass thatch. In a temporary settlement they are arranged either in a circle around a central plaza or in a double row on either side of a broad street. Pottery is universal, but loom-weaving and metallurgy are lacking. Except for local headmen, who are usually succeeded by a son, status differences are minimal. Marriage is monogamous with only infrequent exceptions, and the Mataco alone require a bride-price. Extended families are general, their form depending upon the prevailing rule of residence. This is always matrilocal initially and usually permanently, but a shift to patrilocal residence is more or less common among the Pilaga and Mataco. Descent is bilateral. Kinship terms are reported only for the Mataco, where they are of the Hawiian type. The culture of the Chaco peoples on the whole, when the thin agricultural veneer is stripped off, seems clearly to affiliate fairly closely with that of the Pampean area.

### 8. PARAGUAYAN AREA

On the upper Paraguay River and in the adjacent flood plains reside a small group of tribes whose cultures are not readily classifiable with any of the larger

adjacent areas. They are largely Guaicuran in language, though the Guato belong to an isolated linguistic stock. Interspersed among them, usually in a relationship of dependence to the Mbaya, are a number of small groups of Arawakan speakers known collectively as Guana, of whom the best known are the Terena. The primary dependence of the Guana upon maize and manioc agriculture, their expert loom-weaving of cotton fabrics, and their residence in settled villages of beehive-shaped huts arranged around a central plaza differentiate them strikingly from their neighbors and reflect an old connection with the Bolivian area. The other tribes depend to a much more limited extent, or sometimes not at all, upon the cultivation of maize, sweet and bitter manioc, and sweet potatoes; they do no loom-weaving; and they lead a migratory life, camping only in insubstantial temporary structures or mere windbreaks. Though hunting is important, they spend much of their time in their dugout canoes fishing, gathering wild rice, and engaging in trade and piracy. The fruit of the acuri palm is a staple food, and the Guato are noted for their construction of extensive low mounds to protect the trees from the annual floods. Monogamy is the rule, but polygyny also occurs, usually in the sororal form. Despite the otherwise uncomplicated level of their culture, all the tribes of the area make pottery, slavery and class stratification are found at least among the Guana and Mbaya, and the latter have powerful paramount chiefs who exact tribute from dependent tribes. The family type varies: the Guato have neolocal residence and independent sororal polygynous families; the Guana have matrilocal extended families, while the Terena are organized into bilocal extended families despite a rule of initial matrilocal residence. Descent, however, is universally bilateral, and both the Mbaya and Terena have kinship systems of the Hawaiian type.

### 9. EASTERN LOWLAND AREA

Southeastern Brazil, portions of adjacent Paraguay and Argentina, and a strip of country extending to the northeast behind the coastal highlands between the Atlantic and Goyaz areas constitute the homeland of a group of Tupian tribes possessing an elaborated version of Tropical Forest culture. A highly successful expansionist people, they were in the process of displacing the backward Atlantic tribes from extensive stretches of the seacoast when the Portuguese first arrived. They fall into three major groups: the Guarani of south Brazil and Paraguay, the Tupi of the Rio São Francisco drainage basin and other interior regions, and the Tupinamba in several scattered sections of the Atlantic coast. Differentiated sharply from all three are the Guayaki, a small Tupian tribe in the forests of

eastern Paraguay, who cling to an earlier mode of life without agriculture or permanent settlements, subsisting on hunting, fishing, and especially the gathering of the fruits and pith of the pindo palm. The three dominant groups, whose cultures are strikingly similar, depend primarily upon an intensive agriculture with only supplementary fishing, hunting, and gathering. The men clear the fields, but most of the tillage is done by the women. The staple crops are maize and manioc of both the sweet and bitter varieties, but beans, sweet potatoes, peppers, pineapples, and cotton are also raised. Dogs are lacking, but the Guarani possess domesticated Muscovy ducks. Pottery, loom-woven cotton fabrics (not universal), and bark and dugout canoes are manufactured. Metallurgy is lacking, but the Guarani, when first encountered, had considerable amounts of gold which they had secured by trade with, and raids upon, the outposts of the Inca empire. The major tribes formerly lived in large towns, each consisting of from four to eight huge communal dwellings around a square plaza, the whole surrounded by a double or triple palisade and often also by moats. The houses were rectangular in ground plan with vaulted thatch roofs descending to the ground, and each accommodated an entire extended family numbering as many as 100 or more people. Though local autonomy was the rule, Tupinamba chiefs sometimes extended their authority over several communities. Marriage is effected through matrilocal bride-service, is commonly though not exclusively monogamous, and is contracted by preference with a cross-cousin or a sister's daughter. Though residence is patrilocal for chiefs, other men reside matrilocally in the household of the wife's father, to whom they remain subservient until their eldest daughter has attained marriageable age. Then by marrying her to the wife's brother, her preferred spouse, a man dissolves his bondage to his father-in-law and can remove with his family to his own paternal household. Among the Guarani, patrilocality was apparently more easily achieved than among the Tupi and Tupinamba, and there are suggestions that bilateral descent had given way to an incipient patrilineate. Succession to such offices as household head and village headman is patrilineal in all tribes. Evidence on kinship terminology is abundant but extraordinarily conflicting.

### 10. ATLANTIC AREA

In the highlands which closely parallel the Atlantic coast of Brazil, and also on the coast itself except where they had been recently displaced by Tupian invaders, the Portuguese found a group of tribes with genuinely marginal cultures. Though speaking languages of several quite isolated stocks, they have been persistently confused with the much more advanced Ge tribes of the Goyaz area. The

Atlantic tribes lived for the most part in wandering bands and subsisted by hunting and gathering. They fished very little, and agriculture was absent or minimal except among groups like the Caingang, Camacan, and Maschacali who were most exposed to Tupian influence. Even these tribes cultivated maize and sweet potatoes rather than manioc, which only the Camacan raised to any appreciable extent. The Camacan also stood alone in possessing dogs, building substantial houses, and practicing loom-weaving. Several tribes, e.g., the Aweikoma and Botocudo, even lacked pottery and canoes. Class distinctions were completely absent, and political integration had not advanced beyond the level of autonomous bands or settlements. Dwellings, except for the Camacan with their large communal structures, were constructed of a circle of poles set in the ground, brought together at the top in the shape of a dome or a cone, and covered with leaves or branches. They accommodated only a single family among the Mashacali, Patasho, and Puri, a small extended family among the Aweikoma, Botocudo, and Caingang. Polygyny, especially in the sororal form, was permissible everywhere, but varied in its frequency. Cross-cousin marriage is reported for the Mashacali, and local exogamy for the Botocudo. Residence seems usually to have been optionally either matrilocal or patrilocal, though some tribes tended more toward the one or the other alternative. Unilinear kin groups are reported only for the Caingang, who had exogamous patrilineal moieties. Elsewhere descent appears to have been bilateral, and both the Aweikoma and Botocudo had kinship terms of the Hawaiian type.

### 11. GOYAZ AREA

The Brazilian state of Goyaz is the geographical center of a nearly solid cluster of tribes who speak languages of the Ge stock. In their midst are located the Tupian Tapirape, who have adopted much of the Ge culture, and the Caraja of the Araguaya River, whose language to date appears independent. The Bororo of Mato Grosso, long classed as linguistically isolated, were shown by Lounsbury in 1950 to belong definitely to the Ge stock, and are included here for cultural as well as linguistic reasons though they affiliate more closely with the Paraguayan area in basic economy. The little-known tribes of the interior of northeast Brazil, speaking Caririan and other isolated languages, are likewise included here on the basis of economic and technological similarities, though their social culture is practically unknown. The characterization of the cultures of this area as "marginal"—an old preconception perpetuated in the *Handbook of South American Indians*—is quite unwarranted, for they clearly constitute a mere variant, albeit a distinctive one, of the widespread Tropical Forest type. Thus, with the sole

exceptions of the Bororo and the Terememb of the Atlantic coast, every group subsists primarily by agriculture, supplemented to varying degrees by fishing, hunting, and gathering. Manioc of both sweet and bitter varieties and maize are staples everywhere, and sweet potatoes, beans, and peanuts are also widely distributed. Except among the Caraja, where the fields are worked exclusively by men, both sexes engage in agricultural operations, though with some variation in relative participation. Domesticated animals and metallurgy are lacking everywhere, and only the Cariri practice loom-weaving. Pottery, however, is universal, being found archaeologically in the few regions where it is absent today. Dugout canoes are also common. All tribes have fixed settlements, though several abandon them seasonally for fishing, hunting, or gathering expeditions. Local autonomy under a headman and council of elders is the rule, but the Tarairu in the northeast have paramount chiefs, and among the Sherente the headmen of a district form a democratic superior council. The typical house form is rectangular or elongated with an arched gable roof of thatch. The dwellings of a settlement are arranged in a circle, semicircle, or oval around a plaza on or beside which stands a men's house. Among the Ge tribes, who have moieties, the houses of the two moieties stand on opposite sides of the plaza, and within each division they are further grouped by sib or extended family affiliation. Age-grades, men's and sometimes women's associations, and special agamous ceremonial moieties are widespread, being present, for example, even among the Tupian Tapirape. Marriage tends strongly toward monogamy, usually strict but sometimes qualified by occasional sororal polygyny. Polygyny, however, is reported for the Tarairu. There are occasional suggestions of unilateral cross-cousin marriage. No bride-price is paid. Residence is matrilocal—permanently so for all tribes except the Sherente, among whom a shift to patrilocal residence is normal. Descent is bilateral only among the Tapirape, who also possess Hawaiian kinship terminology. Matrilineal kin groups—moieties, sibs, or both—are found among the Caraja and most of the Ge tribes. The Apinaye and Caraja show evidences of double descent, and the Sherente have only patrilineal sibs and moieties. The modified Omaha kinship nomenclature of the Sherente contrasts similarly with the Crow terms of the matrilineal Timbira.

### 12. PARA AREA

Along the south bank of the Amazon River and its southern affluents from the Atlantic Ocean to the Madeira River, mainly in the Brazilian state of Para, resides an almost solid block of Tupian tribes with a characteristic variant of

Tropical Forest culture. Except for two small nomadic groups in the east, the Tupian Guaja and the Cariban Arara, all tribes practice an intensive agriculture. Sweet and bitter manioc, the staple crops, are supplemented by maize, beans, sweet potatoes, peanuts, peppers, and cotton. Fishing and the capture of crocodiles and turtles are also very important in the vicinity of the larger streams, and hunting and the gathering of palm fruits and Brazil nuts elsewhere. Though some tribes have dogs, domestic animals are commonly lacking, as is metallurgy. Pottery, however, is universal, and loom-weaving nearly so. The Mundurucu make the finest featherwork in South America. The people live in sedentary villages composed of several rectangular multi-family dwellings with thatched gable or hip roofs. Communities are politically autonomous, but western tribes like the Cawahib, Maue, and Mundurucu reveal an incipient development of paramount chiefs. Preferential marriage with a cross-cousin and/or a sister's daughter is specifically reported for several tribes. Monogamy is the rule. Polygyny, though allowed, is rare, usually sororal, and largely confined to chiefs. Residence is initially matrilocal. For some tribes, e.g., the Tenetehara, it is permanently so, but for the majority it is ultimately patrilocal or neolocal. The eastern tribes are bilateral in descent, and the Tenetehara have a kinship system of the Hawaiian type. In the west, however, the Mundurucu and Cawahib possess exogamous patrilineal sibs and moieties.

### 13. XINGU AREA

On the headwaters of the Xingu River in the heart of Mato Grosso reside a number of small tribes of homogeneous culture but diverse languages, representing the Arawakan, Cariban, and Tupian as well as the isolated Trumai stock. With them are here included the culturally more backward and linguistically isolated Nambicuara nation, who lie westward of the rest. The food quest differs considerably with the season. The Nambicuara, who carry this divergence farther than the other tribes, lead a sedentary life of agriculture and fishing only during the rainy season, abandoning their villages and splitting into small migratory bands during the dry season to hunt and gather wild fruits, seeds, and roots. The other tribes remain in or rear their permanent settlements throughout the year, For them, agriculture is the primary subsistence activity, followed by fishing, although both hunting and gathering are also important. Bitter manioc and maize are the staple crops, supplemented by beans, peanuts, sweet manioc, peppers, and cotton. The Bacairi are noteworthy for transplanting and irrigating wild fruit trees. All tribes except the Nambicuara have bark canoes, but pottery and loom-

weaving are confined to some of the Arawakan tribes. Dwellings are elliptical or circular in ground plan with thatched dome-shaped or beehive roofs, and they regularly accommodate a number of families. Except among the Nambicuara, each village has a special guest house, reflecting the importance of intertribal trade. Local autonomy prevails under headmen with little authority, and social classes are lacking. Marriage involves neither bride-price nor bride-service. Monogamy prevails, varied by occasional instances of sororal polygyny. Matrilocal residence is nowhere reported, the Bacairi being neolocal, the Nambicuara bilocal, and the Trumai patrilocal. Descent is everywhere bilateral, though Iroquois kinship terminology is recorded for both the Bacairi and the Nambicuara.

### 14. BOLIVIAN AREA

Lowland Bolivia (the highlands belong to the Peruvian area) is occupied by a large number of tribes which, despite large gaps in our information, appear to be characterized by a fairly homogeneous variant of Tropical Forest culture with a modest overlay of Andean traits. They belong to a welter of linguistic stocks: both Arawakan and Tupian are well represented, but they are heavily outnumbered by small or isolated stocks—Canichanan, Cayuvavan, Chapacuran, Chiquitoan, Intonaman, Mosetenan, Moviman, Otukean, Panoan, Tacanan, and Yuracarean. Agriculture is unimportant only among the Siriono, and is the mainstay of subsistence in most tribes. The staple crops are maize, sweet manioc, and in some instances peanuts, but sweet potatoes, peppers, pineapples, beans, and cotton are likewise widely cultivated. Potatoes and bitter manioc also occur, but with restricted distributions. Important supplements to the food quest are hunting, fishing, and in some regions the gathering of Brazil nuts and palm fruits. Pottery is universal, and the loom-weaving of cotton nearly so. Metals are not worked, although some tribes have gold ornaments obtained by trade from the highlands. With the sole exception of the migratory Siriono, all tribes live in settled villages, sometimes large and not infrequently surrounded by palisades. They are usually centered around a plaza on which stands a temple, men's house, or chief's residence and ceremonial hall, and they are often laid out in regular streets. The Paressi even construct roads between villages. Communal or multi-family dwellings prevail except in the Chiquitos region; they are usually circular or elliptical in ground plan with thatched roofs. Slavery and social class differentiation are fairly common, but political integration does not go beyond the local community except occasionally among the Chiriguano and Paressi. Monogamy or sororal polygyny is the normal form of marriage. Residence is initially matrilocal and

usually permanently so, but ultimate patrilocal residence is reported for the Chiriguano, Macurap, and Mojo. The Siriono are organized into exogamous matri-lineages, and have kinship terminology of the Crow type, but patrilineal kin groups are characteristic of the Chiriguano, Macurap, Tacana, and Yabuti; data are not available for other tribes. Succession to the office of local headman is regularly patrilineal.

### 15. MONTAÑA AREA

Between the Jurua-Purus area and the civilized peoples of highland Peru stretches a thin band of tribes whose cultures are described with a degree of inadequacy unusual even for South America. Their languages are mainly Arawakan and Panoan; they are organized in politically autonomous villages; and they subsist by the cultivation of sweet manioc, maize, beans, peanuts, and peppers with only subsidiary hunting and fishing. In these and other respects they clearly affiliate with the cultures of the Tropical Forest, and particularly with those of the Jurua-Purus area. They are, however, differentiated from the latter, and affiliated with Peruvian civilization, in several possibly significant respects. In the first place, genuine loom-weaving is general rather than sporadic. Secondly, people live in single-family houses rather than communal dwellings except among the Masco and Yamiaca, and are patrilocal or neolocal rather than matrilocal in residence. Finally, some tribes, e.g., the Campa, possess dogs, cultivate potatoes, and engage extensively in trade—traits unreported for their lowland neighbors. Moreover, not only is the region geographically adjacent to highland Peru, but there are specific historical records of Inca invasions, suggesting the probability of further cultural influences from the west if the ethnographic record were more complete. For these reasons it seems advisable to segregate the Montaña tentatively as a distinct cultural province within the broader Tropical Forest area.

### 16. JURUA-PURUS AREA

The extreme western portion of the Amazonian basin, centering on the drainage areas of the Jurua and Purus Rivers but also extending eastward and westward respectively into the watersheds of the Madeira and Ucayali Rivers, is occupied by a group of tribes whose cultures appear, on the basis of inadequate ethnographic information, to constitute a special sub-type of general Tropical Forest culture. In language they affiliate mainly with the Panoan and Arawakan stocks, though the isolated Catukinan and Muran stocks are also represented. Agriculture is important everywhere, hunting and gathering taking a subordinate place in the economy except among the Mayoruna. Fishing and the pursuit of

turtles and manatees, though also less significant than agriculture in many places, assume a primary position among such river tribes as the Ipurina, Mura, and Paumary. The principal crops are maize and sweet manioc, followed by beans, sweet potatoes, peanuts, and peppers. Bitter manioc is conspicuously absent. Men clear the land, but women perform all other agricultural operations. Domestic animals are lacking. Excellent bark canoes, or occasionally dugouts, are made. Loom-weaving occurs only sporadically, but pottery is made by all tribes except the Mura. This tribe, which is also differentiated from its neighbors in possessing only elementary thatched shelters accommodating but a single family, quite possibly reflects an earlier, pre-agricultural and nomadic cultural phase. The rest of the area is characterized by settled communities consisting of one, or sometimes two or several, enormous communal dwellings, usually circular in ground plan with low walls and a conical thatched roof. These are among the largest houses on the continent and among the stateliest anywhere on earth. Among the Yamamadi, for example, they attain a height of 70 feet and a diameter of 120 feet. Each village is politically autonomous under a local headman. Class differentiation is minimal. Monogamy or else limited sororal polygyny prevails, and residence is usually matrilocal with bride-service. The Amahuaca and Mayoruna, however, are patrilocal, affiliating in this respect with the neighboring Caqueta area. The Chama may possess matrilineal sibs, but otherwise the meager ethnographic evidence sheds no light on kinship or rules of descent.

### 17. AMAZON AREA

The islands, shores, and immediate hinterland of the middle and upper Amazon River are occupied by three groups of tribes with a spectacular elaboration of Tropical Forest culture: (1) the Cocama and Omagua, Tupian-speaking tribes of the upper Amazon; (2) the Yurimagua, Soliman, and other linguistically unidentified tribes of the middle river; and (3) the Juri, Wairacu, Marawa, Manao, and other Arawakan peoples lying behind the river tribes and in the triangle between the Amazon and the Rio Negro. The last group, whose cultures are very inadequately known, may affiliate with the Guiana area, but they are included here because their largest tribe, the Manao, were famous river traders who brought even gold from the far west to the mouth of the Amazon in their large dugout canoes and thus gave rise to the delusive El Dorado legend. All these river peoples, before their reduction or extinction, practiced agriculture intensively, raising sweet manioc and maize (the staples), and commonly also bitter manioc, beans, peanuts, pineapples, fruit trees, cotton, and divers other crops.

The tribes on the river banks and islands avoided the labor of brand-tillage by cultivating the beaches during the season of low water. Fishing and the pursuit of manatees, turtles, and other aquatic animals were at least as important a source of subsistence as was agriculture. Metallurgy was not practiced, but excellent pottery and loom-woven cotton fabrics were manufactured. The people lived in multi-family dwellings—usually circular with conical roofs among the Arawakans but rectangular with gable roofs among the Tupians. These were aggregated in large villages. Indeed, so abundant was the food supply and so dense was the population that the shores of the Amazon were bordered by an almost continuous line of houses for hundreds of miles. Slaves were held and traded, and class distinctions were at least incipiently elaborated. Though local autonomy was the rule, paramount chiefs had emerged in some areas. Polygyny was permitted and fairly common. Residence, though initially matrilocal with bride-service, was ultimately patrilocal, and the typical household consisted of a patrilocal extended family. The Tupian tribes accorded a man a preferential right to marry his sister's daughter.

### 18. LORETO AREA

A group of tribes of the Chapacuran, Jivaran, Tucanoan, Zaparoan, and other small linguistic stocks in the province of Loreto in northeastern Peru exhibit related cultures of Tropical Forest type overlaid with a thin Andean veneer. Though hunting and fishing are important, subsistence depends primarily upon agriculture, which is performed by women. Sweet manioc and maize, the staples, are supplemented by beans, peanuts, and other crops. Bitter manioc is unknown. Ducks, guinea pigs, and even llamas are occasionally found in sections immediately adjacent to the highlands. Manufactures include pottery and loom-woven cotton fabrics, but metals are not worked. Villages, which are politically autonomous, include a number of communal dwellings, each occupied by an extended family. Marriage tends strongly toward monogamy, though this is not absolute. Residence is initially matrilocal with bride-service. In some tribes it is permanently so, but in others ultimate patrilocal residence is the norm. In either case bilateral descent seems to prevail, though the Lama may be patrilineal.

### 19. CAQUETA AREA

In Caqueta and adjoining territories of southeastern Colombia reside a group of tribes characterized by a distinctive variant of Tropical Forest culture. In addition to the Chibchan Betoi, the Cariban Carijona, and the linguistically independent Tucano, Tucuna, Witoto, and Peba, they include a considerable

number of Arawakan tribes—the Achagua, Arekena, Baniwa, Caberre, Caua, Guayupe, Ipeca, Piapoco, Sae, Siusi, etc. All these peoples subsist primarily by agriculture, which is women's work. Fishing and hunting are important; gathering rather less so. The staple crop is bitter manioc, but sweet manioc, maize, sweet potatoes, beans, and peppers are also grown. Simple pottery is made, but loom-weaving, metallurgy, and domesticated animals are lacking. Class distinctions are minimal. The people live in politically autonomous villages which normally consist of a single large communal house, elliptical in shape with thatched roof and walls. By virtue of local exogamy, patrilocal residence, and usually a specific recognition of patrilineal descent, the community constitutes a patri-clan. Marriage tends to be monogamous except for local headmen, and is variably effected by bride-service, payment of a bride-price, or the exchange of sisters. Among the Tucano and Witoto, at least, cross-cousin marriage is common, kinship terms are of the Iroquois type, and succession and inheritance are patrilineal. Exogamous patrilineal moieties are reported for the Tucuna.

### 20. SAVANNA AREA

In the forest-streaked savanna country of southeastern Colombia, southern Venezuela, and adjacent Brazil reside various nomadic tribes—the Auake, Caliana, Chiricoa, Guaharibo, Guahibo, Macu, Puinave, Shiriana, etc. Though shown on the accompanying map as occupying a continuous territory, they are actually separated into several isolated groups by intrusive Arawakan peoples of more complex sedentary cultures. The Savanna tribes speak languages of at least seven different stocks, all apparently unrelated to any outside stock as well as to one another. Subsistence is achieved by hunting and gathering, supplemented by fishing. Agriculture is completely unknown except occasionally under Arawakan influence. The people wander in independent migratory bands and live in temporary thatched lean-tos, flimsy pyramidal huts covered with leaves and branches, or portable mat-covered shelters. They make pottery but lack weaving, metallurgy, boats, and apparently even dogs. Their social organization is completely unrecorded.

### 21. GUIANA AREA

In the Guiana region—Brazilian and Venezuelan as well as British, Dutch, and French—reside numerous tribes who reveal a relatively uniform variant of Tropical Forest culture. The overwhelming majority belong to the Cariban linguistic stock. The only exceptions, except for post-Columbian intruders, are Arawakan peoples, notably the Arawak proper or Locono of the coast, the Wapi-

shana of the interior, the Arua and Palikur at the mouth of the Amazon River, and the Barauna group on the left bank of the Rio Negro. Without exception the Guiana tribes are basically agricultural, cultivating bitter manioc as the staple crop, supplemented by sweet manioc, maize, sweet potatoes, pineapples, and peppers. The men clear the land and either plant the crops or assist the women in doing so, but the latter do the cultivation and harvesting. Fishing is a major supplement to the food quest, hunting and gathering rather less so. The dog is the only domestic animal. Some tribes, e.g., the Taulipang or Arecuna, have only bark canoes, but the great majority possess excellent dugout canoes, sometimes with the gunwales raised with hewn planks. Pottery, excellent basketry, and loom-woven cotton fabrics are manufactured by all tribes, but metal working is unknown. Two major house types are found, not infrequently side by side in the same tribe: (1) rectangular structures with thatched gable roofs and (2) large circular dwellings with conical thatched roofs and walls of wattle, bark, or thatch. Here and there they are elevated on piles. A house is generally occupied by a small number of separate families—most typically by those of a man and his resident sons-in-law—but among the Yecuana one large communal dwelling accommodates an entire settlement. Class distinctions are minimal, although at least the Arawak and Taulipang keep slaves. Communities invariably enjoy political autonomy. Intertribal trade is well developed, based on local specialization in handicrafts. Marriage is normally monogamous, although polygyny, usually of the sororal type, is allowed. Unions with a cross-cousin are preferred, and some Cariban tribes permit marriage with a sister's daughter. Residence is typically matrilocal with bride-service, at least for several years. It is permanently so among the Arawak, Macusi, Rucuyen or Oyana, and Taulipang, but is ultimately neolocal among the Carib proper and Palikur, patrilocal among the Apalai, Wapishana, and Yecuana. All reported kinship systems are of the Iroquois type, but descent is usually bilateral. The Arawak, however, have exogamous matri-sibs, while the Palikur possess exogamous patrilineal sibs and moieties. Local exogamy and patrilocal residence make each Apalai, Wapishana, and Yecuana community a patri-deme. The rule of inheritance and that of succession to the office of local headman appear to be regularly patrilineal.

### 22. ORINOCO AREA

The delta and lower reaches of the Orinoco River and its tributaries are occupied by a number of tribes who speak isolated languages and subsist primarily by fishing, the collecting of shellfish, and the pursuit of large river animals,

notably manatees, crocodiles, and turtles. They also gather eggs, the fruit and pith of palms, and wild roots and seeds, but do very little hunting on land. Agriculture is completely absent among such tribes as the Atature, Guamontey, Guarico, and Taparita, is minimal among the Guamo and Yaruro and distinctly subordinate among the Warrau, and is important only among the Otomac and Saliva, of whom the latter are included in the area only tentatively on the basis of quite inadequate information. That the Otomac represent a local specialization rather than an intrusive element from the outside is revealed by the fact that their staple crop is maize and that this belongs to a peculiar variety found only among them and their neighbors, coupled with the further peculiarity that they utilize the floods of the Orinoco River to fertilize their fields. All the tribes make pottery and excellent dugout canoes, but they lack domesticated animals, metallurgy, and (except for the Otomac and Warrau) loom-weaving. Only the Warrau and possibly the Saliva have substantial dwellings. The other tribes occupy the flimsiest of palm-leaf shelters, especially in the dry season, though the Guamo and Taparita build simple tree dwellings during the wet season. Social classes are lacking, and an extreme form of local political autonomy is universal. Monogamy or sororal polygyny is the normal form of marriage, and residence is matrilocal. The Yaruro have exogamous matri-moieties, matrilineal inheritance and succession, and kinship terms of modified Crow type. For the other tribes there is no comparable information, either supporting or conflicting.

### 23. CARIBBEAN AREA

Along the Caribbean coast of Colombia and Venezuela and throughout most of the West Indies there extends a diluted version of Andean civilization which sufficiently resembles the culture of the Isthmian area to warrant Steward's union of the two regions to form his Circum-Caribbean area. They do, however, reveal certain regular differences which impress the present writer as barely meriting their separate treatment. The average level of cultural complexity is somewhat higher in the Caribbean than in the Isthmian area, and there are fewer tribes of simpler cultures. These include the Motilon or Mape on the shores of Lake Maracaibo, to whom fishing is particularly important; the Gayon sub-tribe of the Jirajara, who occupy an arid section of the foothills of the Cordillera de los Andes near the present city of Barquisimeto in northwestern Venezuela and who subsist exclusively by hunting and gathering; and the Callinago or Island Carib, who had wrested most of the Lesser Antilles from their Arawakan predecessors only a few decades before the arrival of Columbus and who largely retained their

original, distinctively Guianan type of culture. The following discussion excludes these three tribes. Agriculture is intensive throughout the area, and in several regions is conducted with the aid of irrigation. Bitter manioc and a considerable number of fruit trees are added to the Isthmian roster of important crops—maize, sweet manioc, beans, and sweet potatoes. Both sexes participate in agriculture. Muscovy ducks, turkeys, and bees, as well as dogs, are domesticated by several Venezuelan tribes. Arawakan languages predominate, although Cariban languages also occur, and in a few instances also Chibchan, Chocoan, Jirajaran, and Timotean. Houses are usually circular with conical roofs rather than rectangular, and accommodate only a single family. Loom-weaving and ceramics are general, and all tribes either work gold themselves or obtain ornaments of gold and gold-copper alloy by trade, which flourishes everywhere. Settlements are large and frequently stockaded. Nearly everywhere they are politically aggregated under powerful paramount chiefs or kings, who are frequently regarded as divine, treated with elaborate ceremony, and transported in litters. Social class distinctions are comparably advanced. Evidences of the matrilineate are widespread, although residence is often patrilocal and inheritance and succession patrilineal. Hawaiian kinship terms are reported for the Cagaba, Iroquois terms for the Callinago.

### 24. FLORIDIAN AREA

The extinct Ciboney of western Cuba and their relatives of southwestern Hispaniola reveal no relationship whatsoever to the peoples possessing cultures of the Caribbean type. Their language, though unidentified, was definitely not Arawakan, and they lacked agriculture, permanent settlements, pottery, metallurgy, and complex social and political structures. They lived a migratory life and subsisted primarily by fishing and shellfishing, supplemented by the catching of turtles and manatees, the gathering of wild vegetal foods, and the hunting of birds, reptiles, and small mammals. In accordance with Rouse's suggestion of their North American origin they are tentatively classed with the Calusa and other non-agricultural tribes of southern Florida in a proposed intercontinental Floridian area.

The various culture areas described above are not, of course, equally differentiated from one another but fall into a smaller number of more general culture types. One such type, the Andean, includes the Isthmian, Caribbean, Colombian, Peruvian, and Chilean areas, and probably also the Mayan and Nahuan areas in North America. A second major type embraces the Tropical Forest areas

(numbers 9, 11-19, and 21 above), among which several sub-types are easily distinguishable. The Pampean and Chaco areas clearly constitute a third primary grouping, the Steppe Hunters. The two remaining hunting areas (Atlantic and Savanna) and the four fishing areas (Fuegian, Paraguayan, Orinoco, and Floridian), however, seem impossible to combine into larger constellations by positive criteria at the present state of knowledge.

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# BURMESE KINSHIP AND THE LIFE CYCLE: AN OUTLINE

CHARLES S. BRANT AND MI MI KHAING[1]

## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

OUR PURPOSE is to present and analyze some basic features of Burmese social organization. So numerous, elaborate and varied are the details of belief and behavior pertaining to kinship and the life cycle that to present them in a manner approximating completeness would be beyond the scope of a brief paper.

The material that follows, concerning the kinship system, patterns of customary behavior between various pairs of relatives, and the life cycle, is to be understood as applying to contemporary Burmese culture as it is manifested in the villages of Lower Burma. In and near the urban centers, where the secularizing influences of the West have permeated indigenous custom to a greater extent, practice is likely to diverge from ideal patterns much more than in the small, homogeneous village communities. Our concern here is with the social life of the ordinary peasantry of Lower Burma. It is hoped that these data may contribute in some measure to the very scant and fragmentary knowledge of modern Burmese culture.[2]

## THE KINSHIP SYSTEM

The basic consanguineal and affinal kinship terminologies are shown in Figures 1, 2, and 3. The kinship terms, corresponding to the numbers shown on the diagrams, are as follows:[3]

1. ʔaméi Mother.
2. ʔaphéi Father.
3. pharjî Parent's elder brother; parent's elder sister's husband.

1 The first-named author of this paper expresses his thanks to the Board of Foreign Scholarships for appointment to a scholarship under the Fulbright Program, making possible the field research period 1949-50 in Burma, and to the Social Science Research Council for supplementary support in the form of a World Area Research Training fellowship.

2 The interested reader is referred to Shway Yoe's *The Burman: His Life and Notions*, first published in 1882 and most recently reprinted by Macmillan & Co., London, for the only fully-rounded account of Burmese culture. See also Mi Mi Khaing, *Burmese Family* (London, 1946) for a culturally insightful narrative of life in a Burmese family.

3 For assistance in transcription of the kinship terms thanks are due Professor W. S. Cornyn. The symbols follow the system employed in his *Outline of Burmese Grammar* (Baltimore: Linguistic Society of America, 1944).

4. ʔûjî Parent's next younger brother; parent's next younger sister's husband.
5. ʔûlaʔ Parent's second younger brother; parent's second younger sister's husband.
6. ʔûlêi Parent's youngest brother; parent's youngest sister's husband.[4]
7. jîjî Parent's elder sister; parent's elder brother's wife.
8. dójî Parent's next younger sister; parent's next younger brother's wife.
9. dólaʔ Parent's second younger sister; parent's second younger brother's wife.
10. dólêi Parent's youngest sister; parent's youngest brother's wife.
11. ʔaphôu Grandfather.
12. ʔaphwâ Grandmother.
13. phôulêi Grandparent's brother; grandparent's sister's husband.
14. phwâlêi Grandparent's sister; grandparent's brother's wife.
15. ʔakóu Elder brother; elder male cousin.
16. máun Younger brother; younger male cousin (woman speaking).
17. nyí Younger brother; younger male cousin (man speaking).
18. ʔamà Elder female cousin; elder sister.
19. nyímà Younger female cousin; younger sister (woman speaking).
20. hnamà Younger female cousin; younger sister (man speaking).
21. θâ Son.
22. θamî Daughter.
23. tú Sibling's son; spouse's sibling's son; son of first cousin.
24. túmà Sibling's daughter; spouse's sibling's daughter; daughter of first cousin.
25. θameʔ Daughter's husband.
26. cwêimà Son's wife.
27. myî Grandchild; sibling's grandchild; grandchild of first cousin.
28. myiʔ Great-grandchild.
29. tí Great-great-grandchild.
31. nyímàlêi Wife.
32. mêimmà Wife (referential).
33. yaupphà Wife's brother; wife's sister's husband.
34. khémà Wife's younger sister; wife's younger brother's wife.
35. mayî Elder brother's wife; wife's elder sister; wife's elder brother's wife.
36. yaukkhamà Spouse's parent.
37. kóu kóu Husband.

4 In everyday usage this term is frequently applied to all uncles, regardless of their age relative to parent.

38. yauccá Husband (referential).

39. mù Husband's younger brother; husband's younger sister's husband.

40. khê?óu Elder sister's husband; husband's elder brother; husband's elder sister's husband.

41. yaummà Husband's sister; husband's brother's wife.

As may readily be seen by inspection of the charts, this kinship system reflects clearly the bilateral family structure, with an absence of terminological differentiation on the basis of the sex of the connecting relative. The other outstanding characteristic is the recognition of relative age at many points. For each generation a distinct set of terms is used. On ego's generation all cousins are merged with siblings; the terms are differentiated, however, according to relative age. In the first ascending generation, it will be noted, parents' siblings are terminologically distinguished according to degree of age relative to the parent. In the first descending generation, however, the factor of age loses significance; sex is the sole differentiating factor, apart from distinguishing terms for ego's own children. On successive descending generations sex distinction is absent and all relatives of a single generation are subsumed under a single kinship term.

Behaviorally as well as terminologically, relative age is the all-important hub upon which the wheel of Burmese social life revolves. Deference to one's elders is reflected in such customs as carrying things for them, refraining from sitting with one's head higher than those of elders, and avoiding postures in which the feet are extended towards such persons.

Beyond such matters of etiquette, the importance of age is even more fundamentally demonstrated in the showing of obeisance to one's elders. This is done on all the important ceremonial occasions. Four such occasions are regarded as obligatory times for paying one's respects. These are the beginning and the end of the Buddhist "Lent"—a period of about three months, roughly from mid-July to mid-October—the New Year, and the harvest. Respect is paid to all of one's elders in the parental generation and above. A visit is made at which an offering, valuable or symbolic, is brought and the elder's blessings are received.

## SOCIAL RELATIONS OF KIN

*Husband–Wife.* The household is normally composed of husband and wife and their offspring. It is a bilateral, limited type of family structure, contrasting markedly with the patrilineal extended Chinese family and joint family of India. Unlike the position of the wife in the Chinese and Indian family systems, that of the Burmese wife is not one of an outsider living in a group dominated by her

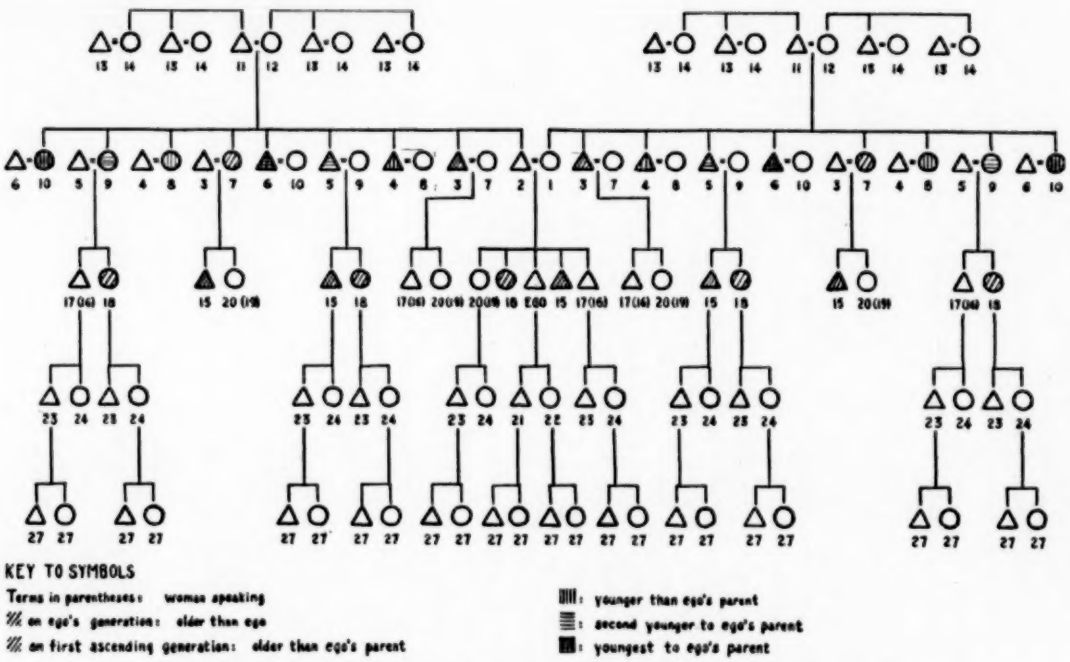


FIG. 1. Diagram of the Burmese kinship system. (Triangles represent males, circles females.)

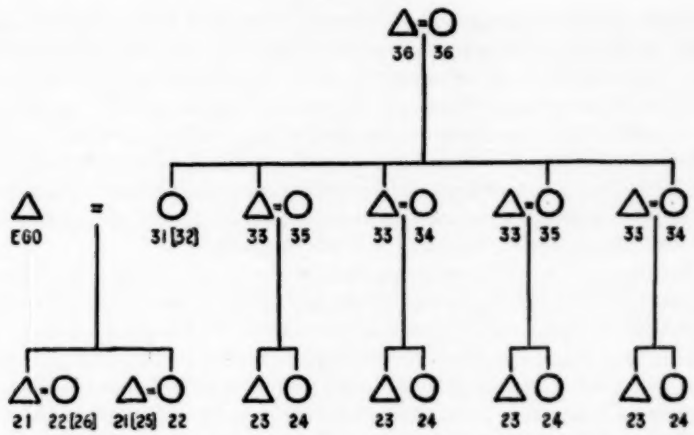


FIG. 2. Diagram of terms for wife's kinsmen. (Terms in brackets in Figs. 2 and 3 are referential usages.)

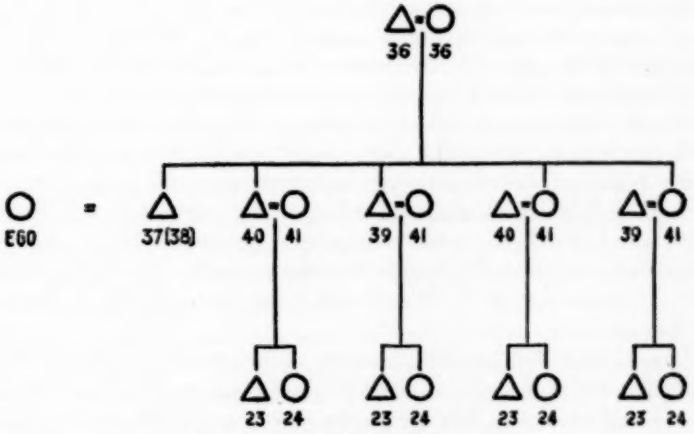


FIG. 3. Diagram of husband's kinsmen.

husband's kinfolk. Post-marital residence is independent and is decided very largely on the basis of economic opportunity. The wife's opportunities for social intercourse with her family of orientation are, of course, greatest when residence is established in her home village; if, however, a couple from different villages marry and find it most opportune to settle in the husband's community, the chances are that the wife will maintain contact with her family of orientation by visits from time to time; such marriages seldom unite persons from villages that are very far apart. The very structural features of bilaterality and absence of extension militate against inequality and male domination.

Burmese culture is frequently remarked for the equality of the sexes, in contrast to the neighboring cultures of India and China. This status of the sexes seems to be the resultant historically of two patterns of thought. One is an apparently very old, pre-Buddhist emphasis upon equality, involving equal inheritance, equal sharing of the property brought to the marriage, equal division of property upon divorce, a prominent female role in social and economic life, and an absence of transmission of surnames. The other thought pattern dates from the superimposition of Buddhism upon older Burmese conceptions: whatever ideas of male superiority exist in Burmese life stem from Buddhist notions of reincarnation. Although Buddha never expressed himself explicitly on the matter, it is taken for granted that only a male can attain Nirvana, since Gautama Buddha, who attained that state, was a male.

In the family household the wife's role includes not only such routine tasks as the preparation of food and serving of meals, keeping the house orderly and clean, and looking after small children; very often it involves control of the family income and the making of all important decisions as to expenditures.

Certain observances and taboos, reflective of deference to males, are expected of the female partner in marriage. She is careful that her lower garments do not touch her husband's bed or his personal belongings; she avoids touching her husband's head. It is believed that the breaking of such taboos may ruin the husband's success and glory, especially his spiritual attainments. These injunctions are followed as a matter of course by Burmese wives and will be broken deliberately only as an act of spite by a woman who wishes to harm or lower her husband for some reason.

Despite the various equalitarian aspects of husband-wife relations, there is a tendency towards a double standard of sexual behavior. A husband who has reason to believe that his wife is engaging in extra-marital affairs is very likely to display violent anger, beat her, and break up the marriage. The wife of a

philandering husband, on the other hand, will usually do no more than display hurt feelings for a brief period; rarely will she separate from her husband, especially if they have children.

*Siblings.* It is the duty of the younger to show deference to the elder. This pertains to the order of serving food, fetching and carrying of things, and even the arrangement of sleeping mats or beds—a younger sibling never should sleep with his feet extended toward an elder sibling. Upon the death of a parent, the eldest sibling of the same sex assumes that parent's socio-economic role in the family.

*Father–Daughter.* Consistent with the age principle, it is a daughter's duty to be obedient and to wait upon her father. Once an unmarried daughter passes the age of puberty, the father is expected to lead a circumspect and moral life more than ever before. Any deviant sexual behavior or drunkenness on his part reflects upon the daughter and detracts from her marital chances.

*Mother–Son.* Although a son owes obedience to his mother, her claim upon him in this regard is tempered by the fact that in Burmese Buddhist thinking, being the mother of a son is itself considered the greatest event of a woman's life and represents the achievement of full existence as a female human being. The relationship is a close and indulgent one. The mother is regarded as more important by the son than his wife; in fact, a son will choose his wife with a great deal of regard for his mother's opinions and wishes.

*Mother–Daughter.* The mother is the female child's early teacher. It is considered most important for the daughter to learn prayers, how to prepare the daily food offering for the household altar, and how to change the flowers on the altar. These things are taught almost from the time the child starts learning language. Other household duties in which the mother instructs her daughter vary considerably with the economic status of the family: in poor families some assistance with tending the animals and winnowing the rice crop is part of the girl's work from about the age of ten. Daughters are expected to show filial respect and deference equally to the mother and father.

*Father–Son.* The father occupies the role of disciplinarian in the family. Disciplining of sons may include physical punishment, though such measures to obtain conformity are not resorted to readily by the Burmese. Prior to adolescence, boys are taught prayers and good habits by their mothers, with the father remaining more or less in the background and interfering only when disciplinary action may be required of him. After a son passes adolescence the father becomes important as his mentor.

*Husband–Wife's Elder Sister.* This relationship tends to mirror a conflict between sex and age as status factors in Burmese culture. There is an implicit conflict between the husband's position *as a man* and his wife's elder sister's position, in many cases, *as his senior in age,* having a claim on outward respect and obedience. In practice this relationship is often cool and aloof in nature, very different from the free-and-easy one between husband and wife's younger sister described below.

*Husband–Wife's Younger Sister.* A man is expected to show great favor to his wife's younger sisters and display more interest in them than in his own sisters. He buys them presents, gives them spending money, and covertly he is expected to be on the lookout for prospective husbands for them. Quite frequently, the wife's younger sisters will accompany her and her husband when she marries, and all will live together. Although husband and wife's younger sisters engage in a great deal of mutual teasing and joking, the relationship does not assume a sexual aspect. Polygyny is very rarely practiced among the Burmese; when it is, however, it takes the sororal form. The rather free-and-easy pattern of behavior between husband and wife's younger sisters sometimes gives rise to suspicion and gossip in the village, when a man and wife are not getting along well, that he is carrying on love affairs with his younger sisters-in-law.

*Mother-in-law–Daughter-in-law.* A daughter-in-law is definitely subordinate to her mother-in-law; if they live in the same household, the mother-in-law is entitled to the best room and to be waited upon by her daughter-in-law. Significantly, the Burmese term for daughter-in-law, cwêimà, means literally "sweat woman."

*Mother-in-law–Son-in-law.* θame?, the term for son-in-law, means "desired son." A son-in-law is a privileged member of the family of his wife. His wishes are respected and his comforts looked after. His mother-in-law will instruct his wife's younger siblings to show him respect and deference.

*Father-in-law–Son-in-law.* The son-in-law has the social status of a son in his wife's family. He has the right to expect his father-in-law to sponsor his career even more than his own father.

*Father-in-law–Daughter-in-law.* The daughter-in-law is expected to regard and treat her husband's father very much as her own father.

*Grandparent–Grandchild.* Because of the great difference in age between these generations, great respect is theoretically due to grandparents. In practice this may be flouted and great indulgence shown to grandchildren. Grandparents

quite frequently help in rearing their grandchildren, telling them stories and teaching them the Buddhist scriptures.

## THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

*Birth and Infancy.* When a woman is pregnant her dreams are considered especially significant. She is expected to remember those of her dreams that concern what her child will be like. The welfare of the child is forecast by some dreams: a dream of only one of things that normally are paired, such as earrings, bodes ill, possibly death, of the child in infancy; a dream of her viscera coming out indicates a great future for the child. Persistent dreams of a particular deceased individual are indicative of whose reincarnation the child will represent. In all forebodings of ill the normal counter-measure is to consult a Buddhist monk or an astrologer, who may give the prospective mother an inscribed *mantra* (prayer) to keep or some amulet for the child to wear as protection.

Although the Burmese woman need not avoid any specific foods during her pregnancy, strong spices are regarded as harmful.

No supernatural means are employed to influence the sex of the prospective offspring. Certain signs are considered prognosticative: if the pregant woman's stomach is pointed, a boy will be born, whereas a broad, flat stomach indicates a girl is in prospect.

Pregnancy among the Burmese is considered a time of great happiness; the woman is greatly indulged and pampered by all concerned.

When the time for delivery approaches any other pregnant women in the household must depart, lest their presence impede labor. Usually the woman's mother, grandmother, or aunt, in addition to a midwife, assists at birth. A fire is prepared in the room in which delivery is to take place and is maintained for ten days.

As soon as delivery has occurred, the umbilical cord is cut with a bamboo knife. The afterbirth is wrapped in the new mother's skirt and is buried at once in the cardinal direction associated with the day of the week of the baby's birth. The mother is fed an infusion of turmeric, and turmeric paste is rubbed all over her body. She is kept close to the nearby fire and made very warm. For three days she is carefully watched to prevent her from sleeping heavily in daylight hours.

The new mother is treated as a delicate invalid for about a month and, in some cases, for as long as three months. She is fed only white rice and dried fish. A soup of garlic and banana stems is drunk to promote the flow of milk. She is not permitted to read, sew, or to do anything that will "arouse or stir the blood."

Omens are read from the position of mongoloid spots on the newborn baby's body. They are said to represent marks put on in a previous existence and their presence proves the child was then a human being. A blue spot on the foot presages a life of travel. Any marks leading from the right shoulder to the left hip, the line that the royal riband takes, indicate a royal future; today, however, with no royalty in Burmese society, such marks merely forecast a "great" future for the child.

A child is constantly watched from the time of birth for signs of whose reincarnation it represents. This is a constant topic in the family conversations.

Any disfigurement in a newborn child is regarded as a carry-over of the parents' store of demerit, as well as that of the child, from previous existences. It is regarded with a sense of shame and sorrow.

Although multiple births are neither preferred nor desired, they are not looked upon with any marked anxiety nor are there any supernatural means employed to prevent them.

In the event of a stillborn baby, the corpse is given special treatment. It is kept in a case, clothed and powdered, and a tray of food is set in front of it every day. It is considered auspicious to care for a stillborn child in this manner: the spirits will guide the parents in their dreams toward the attainment of material prosperity.

For the normal baby who survives, a number of things are done by Burmese parents to protect it from malevolent influences. Before it is a month old, a tiger bone is ground on a stone, together with a little water, and mixed with honey. This is fed to the child to ward off a mysterious infant illness associated with the tiger. A connection is believed to exist between the tiger and convulsions; some parents place a tiger skin under the mattress of the baby's bed to guard against such illness. A knife placed under the baby's mattress is said to protect against illness in general.

To insure good health and well-being for the child, a white thread over which certain *mantras* have been recited may be given by a Buddhist monk and tied around the baby's wrists. Should a baby be admired by people for its growth, the thread may be left on to neutralize the harm that is believed to result from such expressions.

When the child's umbilical cord has dried and fallen off, it is kept and used as a medicine for any illness that befalls the child. A little of it is ground up and mixed with water for such purposes.

A very close connection is believed to exist between mother and child during

the nursing period. Certain observances are necessary. For example, the mother must not eat tomatoes at this time, for they may appear in the baby's stools; for the same reason, she must abstain from green vegetables. Any falling out of her hair during the nursing period is said to be caused by bubbles blown into her by the nursing baby. To prevent the milk supply from drying up, the nursing mother avoids fruits of astringent quality, such as pomegranates and buds of the banyan. She must also take care not to allow milk to fall on the floor and dry.

The Burmese baby is weaned very gradually, beginning at the age of nine months to a year in most cases. This is facilitated by the mother's application of some bitter substance to her breasts.

From infancy an attempt is made to mold the child's features. The ears are pulled outward and the bridge of the nose is pulled upward, to prevent a flat nose. A protuberant, prominent forehead is disliked; to prevent it people play at bumping foreheads with the child. To elongate its neck the child is held under the chin when lifted up from its bath. After being dressed its limbs are pulled straight and it is wrapped around, to insure straight growth. A baby girl's nipples are squeezed to prevent her having a large bosom.

*Naming.* The Burmese believe that one's name can influence the course of events in life; therefore the name of a child is chosen with care. Burmese personal names consist of monosyllables that are selected in a rather intricate manner. The thirty-three characters of the alphabet are traditionally divided into seven groups, each corresponding to a day of the week. The first syllable in a personal name begins with a letter belonging to the group of letters assigned to the particular day of the week on which the child was born. Another syllable begins with a letter belonging to a day that is considered congenial to the day of birth. In the urban centers the tendency nowadays is to follow these rules only for the first term in the name. The syllables of the name stand for qualities of character, physical beauty, various gems, wealth or prosperity. Boys' names usually denote strength, success or brilliance, while grace, beauty, tenderness, and various precious stones are the most common meanings of girls' names. A son is never named syllable for syllable after his father, for this is considered disrespectful and an obstruction to each other's prosperity. There is also a tendency to avoid naming children after deceased relatives. Terms indicating large numbers, such as million, *lakh* (one hundred thousand), sometimes appear in the names of both sexes. An interesting contemporary example is the comic strip heroine of a leading Rangoon daily newspaper, Than Than, literally "Million Million."

The name of the child is rather informally conferred by means of a feast to

which the family invites the people of the village. In the larger communities a written invitation may be sent, in which the name of the child is announced. The feast occurs in the family house, to which the invited guests bring presents and where they may see the child. The only ritualized feature of this event is the washing of the child's hair, which is always done by an elderly person. This may occur, however, before the arrival of the guests.

Because of the significance and influence attributed to the personal name, it may be changed very readily and informally. If it is felt that ill fortune is in the offing, an announcement may be made in the village of change of one's name.

Childhood nicknames as well as teknonymy are utilized by the Burmese, but not to the exclusion of use of the personal name.

*Childhood.* Burmese children are generally indulged and their existence is more or less carefree and unencumbered by rigid discipline, apart from early inculcation of respect for elders, until they are of educational age and considered capable of understanding the moral teachings of Buddhism. A male child is valued religiously, for at an early age he will be initiated into the monkhood, remaining from a few days to several years, depending upon family circumstances and needs. The initiation of a son brings great religious merit to his parents.

In the Burmese village children are valued for the economic help they render. This will, of course, vary with family circumstances. But in the ordinary cultivator's family, sons and daughters help from the age of about nine or ten years in tending cattle, getting firewood, and winnowing rice. Children are also looked upon as a kind of social insurance for old age.

*Puberty and Adolescence.* Apart from modern legal ideas concerning the attainment of adulthood, the Burmese view is that one is adult when physiologically mature. Upon reaching pubescence boys as well as girls are referred to by a term meaning "virgin." The connotation is that the individual has now entered a period of life in which the dangers of temptation are especially great and in which corresponding precautions are necessary.

A girl's first menstruation is believed to cleanse her system; frequently, such phenomena as eruption of the skin or sexually delinquent behavior preceding the first menstrual period are regarded as evidence that the "blood is trying to flow." Although the idea of uncleanliness is associated with menstruation, there is no segregation of the girl or particular fear of contamination. So long as she conducts herself with propriety and modesty a girl is free to move in public at this time.

Ideally, the attainment of puberty is the time for the girl's ear-boring cere-

mony, but in actual practice this often takes place as early as her seventh or eighth year. Since this is a feast occasion involving considerable expense to her family, there is a tendency to hold a single ceremony, at which perhaps a pubescent girl, together with her younger sisters or cousins, will all have their ears bored. On the same occasion male children of approximately the same age may be initiated into the Buddhist monkhood.[5]

The girl initiate is dressed for the occasion in the traditional garb of the Burmese court, and in addition she wears a spired-helmet type of head dress. The villagers gather at her family's house for the event. An elderly woman rubs an anaesthetic plant substance on the girl's ear lobes and pierces them with gold pins. The pins are left in the ears, bent back. Later, if larger holes are desired, rolled leaves may be inserted. The family presents gifts to the assembled guests; often these are conventionalized tokens, such as inscribed cigars and fans.

*Courtship and Marriage.* Young people in the villages find ample opportunities to assess each other's manners, physical appearance, and personality in the company of others, at feasts and various gatherings. If a young man and woman are together apart from the company of others it is assumed that sex relations are involved. In fact, such going together is spoken of as "getting married." The Burmese find it hard to conceive of a young unmarried couple associating on a purely friendly, non-sexual basis: such behavior would be regarded as contrary to nature. However, unchaperoned association is disapproved and does not occur very frequently.

Once a pair have decided they wish to marry, the boy will inform his parents of his desire. They will already know, especially in the smaller villages, of the standing of the girl's family and of her dowry potentialities; in fact, as soon as they have sensed their son's interest in a particular girl they will take steps to acquire this information. They will also ascertain whether acceptance by the girl's family is likely. In a small community the approach may be made directly by the boy's parents. In larger centers a female go-between is more likely to be employed. The boy's parents will be informed by the girl's family that the decision must await the outcome of consultation with an astrologer concerning the compatibility of the birth dates of the prospective bride and groom. If the marriage is found to be an auspicious one—which it will usually be found to be if the girl's parents desire the match—an affirmative answer will be relayed to the boy's parents. The latter will then call upon her parents and in the presence of elders, not necessarily related to either family, formally ask for the girl's hand.

5 Description of the boy's initiation ceremony is being reserved for a separate publication.

From this moment the couple are considered betrothed, and must not go about in public unchaperoned.

The wedding date is astrologically determined. The length of the engagement period depends upon the availability of an auspicious wedding date. Generally speaking, lengthy engagements are disliked. In no case should an engagement carry over the Buddhist "Lent."

Before the wedding ceremony, the bride's house is open to friends and relatives, who are expected to drop in to help prepare the house for the wedding, lending household items that may be needed for the occasion. A pavilion adjoining the house is erected to accommodate the crowd that will attend. All the helpers and would-be helpers in this work are offered meals and light refreshments.

The bride's family normally bears all the expenses of these preparations, but sometimes the boy's family will mention a sum of money either as a contribution toward the wedding or as an indication of their son's ability to support a wife. If such funds are forthcoming, they will mention them at the time they ask for the girl's hand.

One room in the girl's house is set aside as the bridal chamber. In families of average or better financial means it is furnished with a bed, draperies, and complete toilet and dressing facilities. In poorer families that cannot afford to furnish the bridal chamber in elaborate fashion, some show of style will be made in furnishing the bed at least. By the evening before the wedding day the room must be ready, with all the wedding gifts on display.

On the wedding day three or four intimate married friends of the girl dress her. This must not be done by widows or divorcees, for it would bode ill for the marriage. For unmarried girls to perform this task would be immodest. Neither should a pregnant woman dress the bride, for this would be bad for her baby. The dressing of the bride begins sufficiently early for her to be ready at the astrologically-determined wedding hour.

The bridegroom's party arrives just prior to the appointed time for the ceremony. It includes two of his bachelor friends as well as his family. He takes his seat on a cushion on the platform that has been specially erected for the ceremony. The bride is brought out by her matrons, and approaches with her eyes downcast. She takes her seat on a cushion on the bridegroom's left. Across the platform, from left to right, are placed three silver offering bowls. A fourth bowl, on the right hand edge of the platform, contains puffed rice. The bride-

groom's bachelor friends take seats to his rear; the matrons of the bride sit directly behind her.

Either a Brahmin or a lay elder, arranged for by the bride's mother, officiates. He recites a paean of praise concerning the merits of the bride and groom and the goodness of their families. The bride and groom are each handed a spray of flowers from the offering bowls and they make obeisance to the guardian spirits of their respective households. With a second spray they make obeisance to their parents and elders. Then a small tray containing fruit and rice is placed before them. The person officiating then places a spoonful of this food first to the bridegroom's, then to the bride's lips. As he does this he makes a statement to the effect that this is the auspicious meal and that he hopes blessing may flow from it.

At this point, a happy and fruitfully married couple from among the oldest people in the community step forward to marry the couple. The left hand of the man is placed on top of the right hand of the girl. Water is poured on their hands thus joined and a silk scarf tied over them as the elderly couple recite words to the effect that they are now united. If there is a Brahmin or professional chanter present he arises and intones a chant of praise for long life. The contents of the bowl of puffed rice and silver (or money) are scattered among the audience and everyone scrambles for them. Now the bride and groom rise and are led to the bridal chamber, across the doorway of which is stretched a golden chain. After the bride has entered, anyone who wishes to do so tries to barricade the doorway and demand money of the groom. He is obliged to pay everyone who makes such demands. This money is known as "stone money," from the old custom, still practiced in some cases, of stoning the house of the couple on the wedding night until paid to desist. This behavior, the taunts and demands that are expressed, has an implied bawdiness about it. Once the couple have entered the bridal chamber others have a right to go in to inspect it. When all have left the chamber there is general feasting. In former times wedding feasts were on a large scale, when every guest was given a present. Today, however, the feast partakes more of the nature of a tea party and only a symbolic gift, usually either a cigar or a fan, is given.

*Old Age.* Old age, in Burmese thought, is the period after one's children are grown, the "third age" of life. Women are definitely considered to be in old age after the menopause. The terms in Burmese for "old lady" and "old man" are synonymous with grandparent terms, both in address and reference. Sometimes "old mother" is used for "old lady."

To the Burmese, long life is a great blessing and an indication of merit earned. Long life is prayed for and old age greatly idealized.

The ideal aged person is one who has successfully reared a family, has grandchildren and a certain amount of material wealth. The aged are expected to be retiring and unobtrusive in their behavior. They do not go out visiting very much; they eat less food; and avoid appearing too well dressed or jeweled when attending religious observances.

An attitude of resignation characterizes the outlook of the aged person in Burmese society. It is unheard of that aged people should work: a possible exception is the village headman, who, it is felt, should be a person of long experience. When aged people live with their children they assume the role of teachers of their grandchildren. Most of the time of elderly people is spent in activities centering around the pagodas and monasteries, organizing of religious festivals, and raising funds for the monks and charities. In fact, they take leading roles in such activities.

The elderly members of the household arise early to see that rice is cooked for the daily offering to the monks and to insure that the household altar is properly looked after. It is preferable for them to arise before dawn, for to do so is considered very meritorious.

Certain of the taboos that apply to younger people, mostly those connected with death, do not apply to the aged.

*Death and Funeral Observances.* To the Burmese, the decline of the human body is part of the inevitable course of nature. When this occurs the soul must leave. The butterfly is the symbol of life: when a person dies, "the butterfly leaves his body."

When death approaches, valuables, such as jewelry, are removed from the person and the death-bed, because people are reluctant to use anything with which a person dies. These things are given to the monastery. A relative chants as the person is dying, to fix his mind upon the truths of Buddhism and to divert it from worldly goods and ties of kinship.

As soon as death has occurred, everyone present cries and wails. Before rigor mortis sets in, relatives bathe the corpse, using a new water pot for the purpose and pouring the water over the body from foot to head, the opposite direction from that practiced by the living. If the water pot must be refilled at all, this must be done an odd number of times. The pot is then put outside the house, upside down, and anyone outside the family of the deceased may take it. Then

another filled pot is placed underneath the bed of the corpse. The hair of the dead person is dried and spread out, hanging loose. His jacket is put on backwards; his skirt is tucked in at the back instead of the front. The two big toes are tied together, as are the thumbs; the arms are folded on the breast; and the body is covered with a white sheet. Money may also be placed in the mouth. This practice is sometimes attributed to the custom of earlier times when, it is said, bodies were simply abandoned: the belief is that the deceased had to walk to the cemetery, where the grave-digger buried him and took the coins from his mouth in payment.

The corpse must be watched at night; groups take turns at this duty. It is sometimes said that the night watch is kept to prevent malevolent spirits from stealing the body.

Burial occurs according to convenience, when the relatives can gather. While the body lies in state there is open house to those who wish to come to pay their last respects to the deceased. When ready for burial, the body is placed in a wooden coffin with a sheet over the coffin. The water pot, taken from under the bed, is carried behind the coffin as it is taken out. Water is sprinkled on the floor until the party is out of the house, at which point the pot is broken. The body is carried feet first toward the cemetery. As it is lowered into the grave, the relatives kneel and make obeisance. On the return trip from the cemetery one member of the party is required to carry the sheet and to refrain from looking back.

By the time the funeral party reaches the house the bed has been cleared away for disposal. A white cloth is spread on a mat in one corner of the room. The person bearing the cloth says, as if talking to the deceased, "There is your seat."

On the sixth day after death, the person who placed the white cloth for the deceased to sit upon carries a paper umbrella to the cemetery and sticks it into the grave, saying, "I have come to call you for tomorrow's ceremony." If the umbrella remains upright it means the deceased will return as requested. If the umbrella falls down it indicates that the spirit has departed and cannot return. The person who performs this ritual must not talk to anyone en route to the cemetery.

On the seventh day a ceremony takes place. The monks come to the house to eat and there is chanting of prayers. The monks are given offerings for their own use, plus a special tray containing white thread. The monks collectively hold the thread, which is a symbol of good, while they chant. The people present are

seated before the monks, repeating prayers and precepts after them. The deceased person is supposed to be sitting on the mat prepared for him and benefiting from this ceremony. Then the people are fed, the monks depart, and the influences of death are considered to be banished. The thread is kept in the house.

The Burmese do not revisit graves. Nor is there any upkeep of cemeteries, for folk belief has it that the tidying of graves will cause more people to die. The dead are commemorated by the meritorious act of feasting the Buddhist monks.

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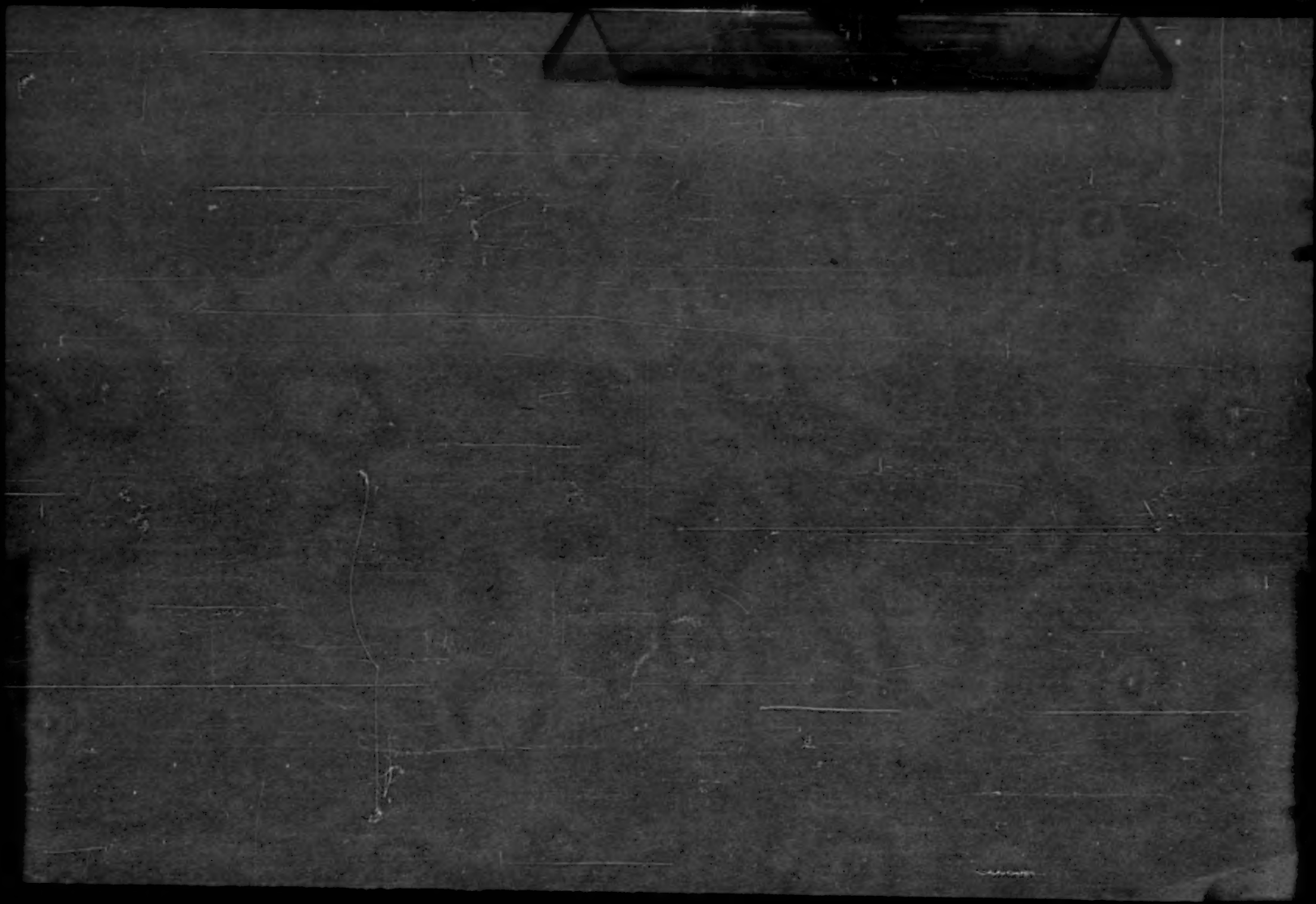
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